

Topic: "Integration of minorities and Interculturalism
in the Greek education system".

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Abstract

Intercultural Education Policy, which first emerged in countries whose societies were evolving into multicultural communities, like the classic destinations for migrants, or had already become multicultural, like the former colonies, reflected thinking and debate on the new educational needs which had arisen and on the new philosophy which was required to permeate the whole educational system. It appeared to be the most suitable education policy response for the multicultural and democratic societies, those which comply with international law and show respect for human rights, those in the process of becoming, or which have already become, pluralistic societies. Greece is not an exception to this rule. While it is evident that international socio-political developments gave rise to the concern and debate from which Intercultural Education was born, and although the beginning of the 21th century is described as the period of the refugee, because of the mass movements of population it witnessed, these people are rarely included in the debate from which Intercultural Education sprang, they are ignored as a student population with special features or special educational needs- not that these needs constitute an incurable and chronic disease-yet they are officially included as a target group in the general philosophical framework of Intercultural Education.

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INTRODUCTION

The coexistence of many cultures within a predominant civilization in a particular place and time signifies the conception of Multiculturalism, but when these cultures are interconnected and interrelated creating a new aspect of society and civilization then Interculturalism emerges. Through educational and cultural policies processes Interculturalism promotes discussion, builds up the cultural relations of the society and creates a new social tissue, a cultural puzzle composed of different cultural pieces. This cultural puzzle should characterize a mix of cultures, beliefs and accomplishments which are equally but not separately take up space in the society. That is why, the concept of Interculturalism holds a position in all levels of society, from the local to the national till the supranational level¹.

Interculturalism is a recent modern phenomenon of a western ideology, which became a social theory of cultures. The theory that people should live and coexist together without fighting, despite differences in culture lies on the opposite side either of cultural antagonism or cultural assimilation theory. Interculturalism contradicts racism, xenophobia and ethnocentrism².

Interculturalism prerequisites equality towards majority and minority cultures and gives the chance to create a global cultural puzzle to both cultures. But do all the above lie only in the sphere of theory or can also be facts of reality? The model of Intercultural theory concedes that question. However, up until now someone can talk only for one direction demonstration of theory in practice. Commonly, in fact, the theory is understood in one line only and denotes an internalization of cultural

¹ United Nations Joint Programme, " The Role of High Education in Fostering Intercultural Dialogue and Understanding in Multicultural Society", Enhancing Dialogue and Collaboration through Intercultural Education and Research in <http://cisr.fzf.ukim.edu.mk/pdf/public.pdf>

²<http://cisr.fzf.ukim.edu.mk/pdf/public.pdf> Ibid, p. 17.

principles and the experiences of the majority culture by the minority culture. Though, on the other line (minority line), this theory demonstration hardly, if at all, occurs³.

Consequently, there are a lot of ethnic cases, where Interculturalism becomes a demonstration of cultural assimilation not only at a state level but also at a supranational level. Formerly, assimilation policy was a tool of the strong countries, which imposed their prevailing cultural characteristics over the minority or immigrant culture in order to preserve their national cultural identity and prosperity. And if that was the case for the internal politics of a State, nowadays assimilation is a tool in the hands of the supranational players towards the implementation of foreign policy. Therefore, weaker nations concern about losing their individual cultural identity in the name of globalization⁴.

Actually, the perception of a weak or a strong culture doesn't exist. There are only powerful states which produce "strong" cultures through globalization. Powerful states play the game of the "strong and weak" which means "together or alone". Weaker cultures don't desire to live in isolation, so they agree with the regulations of the strong, which in fact leads to the following result: internalization of cultural values of the strong. Today, it is obvious that the game of 'together or alone' (globalization) is being played at a supranational political and economic level⁵.

Such games are described in other words as cultural hegemonism of the strong state. Interculturalism perception on the contrary, depends on how cultures, both strong and weak, are interrelated or interiorize their cultural values and experiences. Therefore, it is only right that following questions arise: Is this also valid for the majority cultures, or at a global level, for the cultures of the powerful states? Is the cultural identity of the weak sacrificed for the domination of the cultural identity of the strong? Does anybody have a right to cultural exclusiveness? What right have the economic and militarily strong to shamelessly impose their truth as the absolute truth?

³ Ibid.

⁴ Brown, Susan K. and Bean, Frank D. "Assimilation Models, Old and New: Explaining a Long-Term Process", OCTOBER 1, 2006 at <http://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/assimilation-models-old-and-new-explaining-long-term-process/> and in <http://cisr.fzf.ukim.edu.mk/pdf/public.pdf>

⁵ Manfred B. Steger and Paul James, "Ideologies of Globalism", Globalization and Culture: Vol. 4, Ideologies of Globalism, Sage Publications, London, 2010 at http://www.academia.edu/4510893/Globalization_and_Culture_Vol._4_Ideologies_of_Globalism_2010

If Intercultural policy is the answer to the above questions, then Intercultural Education is one of the most powerful mechanisms for the achievement of this policy. Intercultural education is a new theoretical model, which deals with the implementation of educational influence over young and old, mutual respect and understanding of one another, through mechanisms of communication, which don't exclude or undermine any cultural values.

However, there is not a common Intercultural Education policy model of implementation, as its implementation depends on the social and political profile of the relative country. More specifically, the most powerful countries in the world interpret Intercultural Education as education which should contribute to the interiorization of experiences and cultural values of the dominant majority culture to minorities and immigrant students, so as to integrate them more easily and successfully into the cultural, political and economic reality. This is the case with USA, Great Britain, France, Switzerland, Spain, Germany and many other countries in the world, where special courses for adults and additional lessons for students are taught in the name of Interculturalism. In Germany, there are specialized facilities for the delivery of this kind of Intercultural Education⁶. It is obvious that this policy is diametrically contradictory to the theoretical interpretation of Intercultural Education, as it implies educational exclusion⁷. It is a paradox that the creators of the idea for Intercultural Education implement a practice in their own countries completely opposite to the declared goals.

Academics so far indicate that the idea of Intercultural Education is based on the right to diversity and the right to education (Education for All Declaration)⁸. It is rather common now for many countries to adjust their educational system taking into serious account linguistic and cultural diversity due to big population movements of the last decades. In many cases these movements cause xenophobia and racist attitudes even violent behavior within societies that insist on maintaining their cultural homogeneity despite their high percentage of foreign population.

⁶ Frauke Miera, "German Education Policy and the Challenge of Migration", EUV Frankfurt, December 2007, Paper prepared for the EMILIE project at http://www.eliamep.gr/wp-content/uploads/en/2008/10/german_education_policy_and_the_challenge_of_migration.pdf

⁷ <http://cisr.fzf.ukim.edu.mk/pdf/public.pdf>

⁸ Ibid.

During the last years, Greece has become a reception country for migrants, while it used to be a sender country. This phenomenon along with the continuing flow of refugees having arrived in Greece by sea creates new challenges for the Greek educational system and the Greek society at large. The presence of foreign students in all schools in the country is now evident, particularly in schools in the capital region and Thessaloniki and to some degree in other urban centers, too. Greece should not only notice on short terms these issues related with the presence of foreigners but also those associated with the second generation and its training. The increasing attendance of immigrant children in Greek schools creates new educational realities and raises critical issues concerning both the management of diversity and the ensuring of equal opportunities for the children of migrants. What is the situation like with the Intercultural Education in Greece? To answer this question, we must take a look of the education system itself, and to find the objectification of the idea of Intercultural Education policy, if it exists.

Furthermore, since the late 80s, Europe's efforts to zero migration failed, because on the one hand, there is a strong demand for migrants in labor by employers, and on the other hand the incentives of immigrants in most cases are really powerful⁹. Nowadays, the European Union's perspective on immigration imposes besides the control of migration flows, political integration of immigrants, too. In this context, the reception countries, must take the initiative and responsibility for effective policies of integration. The legislative framework governing the permission of stay and work of immigrants is one of the important parameters of this matter. Moreover, it is possible that existing distortions in its application are able to create many problems to immigrants. These problems, along with rejection from society, is hindering the integration of immigrants, at least from the point that people perceive integration as a gain of equal opportunities in a fair society and that integration is an issue concerning both migrants and the host society. It is also important that failures in the implementation of immigration policy does not only invalidate the reliability of the State, but also leads to the disintegration of society, because immigrants due to their insecure position, are encouraged to act outside the formal processes, resulting in the

⁹[http://old.psych.uoa.gr/~vpavlop//index.files/pdf/ddpms%20undocumented%20immigrants%20in%20Greece%20\(Fakiolas\).pdf](http://old.psych.uoa.gr/~vpavlop//index.files/pdf/ddpms%20undocumented%20immigrants%20in%20Greece%20(Fakiolas).pdf)

strengthening of non-institutional procedures, which is the case of illegal immigrants coming to Greece.

Greece, we could say that it is no longer a new host country. In contrast, Greece has a historical background of applied policies, at least in some areas, so as to be able to assess their effects, and furthermore, to draw on the experience from the implementation of policies in other countries which were traditional immigration reception countries.

With this study my aim is to highlight the developments of Education Policy associated with the presence of minorities and immigrants in public schools from the point of view of various stakeholders eg, students, educators, parents, local government and present the solutions proposed by them. Therefore, since my aim is to identify the policy implications, I record all the good and bad practices in education policy of Greece through mixed-methods of research. Assuming that education is a fundamental right of all children, which is recognized internationally and is enshrined in international procurement, highlighting the factors that facilitate it, will lead to design an effective policy so that children can enjoy their right to education and should not be excluded from the educational process and thereby led to professional and social exclusion. What is clear is that, the current reality in Greece, as it has been formulated by the presence of immigrants, minorities and refugees, could not be included in any policy planning, for example a plan for employment, without counting this segment of the population, thus , it cannot be designed any education policy in Greece without taking into account the current or future presence of “foreigners” in schools.

Outline.

The thesis is divided mainly into two parts: the first one is a theory part and the second is the empirical part. I developed my thesis according to deductive reasoning, i.e. from the general to the particular one. This means that theoretical part consists of two chapters. In the first chapter I describe briefly Education Policies, Legal Frameworks, Education Models within European Union (general), and in the second part I present their applications in the Greek(particular) environment. The theoretical

part is necessary to obtain better understanding of the concepts arose (e.g. Multiculturalism, Interculturalism etc.) and of the application of the ‘theory’ (e.g. Laws, Policies) in to practice (empirical part).

The theoretical part is followed by a ‘Methods’ chapter, where the problematic of the research, the formulation of hypothesis and the methodology to be used are underlined.

The empirical part is divided into five subchapters, according to the methods and the data I used respectively for my research. More specifically, five studies were conducted, differentiating one another in terms of research method, level of education, stakeholders and location, in order to have more concrete results. Each of the study is presented on the following form: data, analysis and general conclusions. Finally, in the last part I make an overall assessment with conclusions and policy recommendations. A reference in the literature is also mentioned at the end of the thesis.

PART 1

CHAPTER 1

1. European Union and Education Policy.

The educational policy of European Communities is divided into two periods. During the first period, by establishing the European Coal and Steel Community (1951) until 1971, there is no educational policy of the Communities. During the second period, this begins on 16 November 1971 until today, we can observe a gradually positive political change in education in general. The Treaty of Maastricht on the European Union, with the amendments made to the Treaty establishing the European Economic Community, creates a new situation for educational affairs of the European Union and its Member States¹⁰.

At the same time, the incorporation of Education policy under the same title with Social policy by the Community, gives the Education policy of Community a wider social and political dimension. Among the broader objectives pursued by the European Education policy are being included the following¹¹:

- Promotion of European identity
- Fight against racism and xenophobia.
- The contribution to the establishment of the idea of European citizenship.
- The preparation of young people for the better integration into the gradually shaped Single Labor Market.

¹⁰ Milesi Christina Paschaliori Vasiliki, "Η εκπαιδευτική πολιτική της Γερμανίας, Αγγλίας και Ελλάδας στη Διαπολιτισμική Εκπαίδευση, τεύχος 8, pp. 2 at <http://www.pi-schools.gr/download/publications/epitheorisi/teyxos8/7.pdf>

¹¹ Tsaousis D. , "Ευρωπαϊκή Εκπαιδευτική Πολιτική", Αθήνα, 1996, Gutenberg, pp. 13-14.

- The fight against social exclusion by exploring accessibility to disadvantaged categories of population in the educational process and providing to adults rehabilitation opportunities in the labor market.
- Ensuring the conditions of free movement and settlement for labor reasons to Member States.
- The interconnection between education and society by promoting cooperation between educational institutions, business and scientific organizations.
- Ensuring a highly trained and adaptable workforce to new technological developments, under limited conditions for renewal and growing aging of the economic active population.
- Ensuring production capacity and the use of modern technology to make the European Union capable of developing itself economically and to maintain a high standard of living under conditions of economic globalization and hard competition.

The European Community Education policy can be divided into ‘general’ and ‘special’ Education Policy¹². The ‘general’ Education Policy refers to the educational project and the educational service offer in general, whoever the actor, levels, processes and the target population it is. The ‘special’ Education Policy concerns specific population groups (eg disadvantaged groups, people with disabilities, etc.) or measures and initiatives referred to specific issues, such as eg the exchange of information and experiences (‘Euridiki’ program), the promotion of open and distance learning and the development of modern educational technology and innovative forms.

The European Education policy can also be divided into ‘formal’ and ‘informal’¹³. The policy pursued by the Community may be ‘formal’ in two respects: firstly it seeks clear and specific objectives, laid down in the Treaty (Articles 126 and 127), and secondly, because the ‘formal’ Education policy is implemented through the official national bodies of each member state, which grant academic titles or professional qualifications. ‘Formal’ is the Education policy pursued mainly through programs such as Socrates and Leonardo Da Vinci (regarding the part of business cooperation with educational or academic institutions). Informal is the Education policy regarding

¹² Tsaousis D. , “Ευρωπαϊκή Εκπαιδευτική Πολιτική”, Αθήνα, 1996, Gutenberg, pp. 15.

¹³ Tsaousis D. , “Ευρωπαϊκή Εκπαιδευτική Πολιτική”, Αθήνα, 1996, Gutenberg, pp. 16.

the provision of education and training services that do not lead to an academic or professional title and are offered under the supervision of the State or authorized by the State bodies with monitoring and coordinating responsibilities.

1.2. Education Policy Models and analysis.

Migration alters the data in the host countries which, among other challenges they have also to face that of education as shaped by the new reality, namely Multiculturalism among the student population. Although the policies adopted from the various countries regarding issues of immigration differ, depending on their history and the general political and national identity, a common axis and target seems to be the combination of the smooth integration in the school system, parallel with the preservation of national identity, i.e. the “strong-sovereign” national identity.

In response to the problems that have arisen in recent decades by the influx of immigrants in Europe and in the US, configuration and test educational models came in order to smooth the integration and adaptation (psychological-social-learning) process of students with different national and cultural identity, in the education systems of host countries.

The brief description of the following models, will illustrate whether the educational policy encourages or not, through the educational system, the maintenance of linguistic and cultural identity of each individual. In terms of social and therefore education policy, host countries followed policies which could be summarized according to scientific theory and practice in five models¹⁴:

- A) The assimilatory model-“Assimilation”. This approach has been dominated by the middle 60s, and is based on the view that in the modern nation State there are not minorities, and hence, various national or migration groups should be included in the national total population, to ensure the cohesion of the state. Thus, the school is monolingual and monocultural and it

¹⁴ The proposed categorization seems to enjoy wider academic acceptance. Nikolaou G., 2000, pp.119-135, and Zografou A., 2003, pp. 60, and Sklavou K., 2004, pp.17.

aims to help all children to gain proficiency in the national language and culture. Therefore, the program is adapted to this position. In this context, the integration of children of different cultural backgrounds, e.g. foreigners, are treated as the "educational problem" in the sense that these students must overcome as quickly as possible their ignorance regarding the national language in the reception country. Assimilation is considered a measure, which on the one hand, does not create problems in the progress of all students and secondly, it does not create any tensions in the school, as there are no reactions from parents of the native students.

- B) The model of ‘‘Integration’’. This vision perceives cultural characteristics of an ethnic group as a constituent element of the new identity and consequently, the specificities of the different national identities are accepted to the extent, that those specificities do not prevent their integration into society and do not obviously threaten the prevailing cultural assumptions. In the area of Education, the umbrella of ‘‘Integration’’ includes actions for teaching the language of immigrants as well as the development of school and social curricula for the integration of their children in school and society. The emphasis, as in the previous approach, is given to the integration of children with different linguistic and cultural backgrounds in societies of the host country, so as to ensure the linguistic and cultural homogeneity of these societies.
- C) The Multicultural model-‘‘Multiculturalism’’. According to the literature, it is not clearly defined the concepts of "Intercultural education" and "Multicultural education". The National Council for Social Studies in the US recognized the confusion and the lack in the definitions, and presented a text in 1991 with the basics points and goals of Multicultural education. This is a text, which was based on a curriculum guide and it consists of 23 points, which are the guidelines for the objectives and implementation of Multicultural education¹⁵. Historically in the US, where the State defined itself as a multi-ethnic nation, since immigrants had the purpose of permanent settlement, the aim was to merge all the differences and create, through this merger, the US national citizen. The model of Assimilation, was serving the

¹⁵ The text is available at <https://www.socialstudies.org/>

policy of "Melting pot", namely: assimilation of all immigrants with standard culture WASP (White Anglo-Saxon Protestant), was unsuccessful and therefore, in 70s, it was adopted the model of Multicultural society¹⁶. Then the application of this model was spread to Europe, Canada and Australia. Of course, in any resolution of the embodiments of Multiculturalism in the US and Europe we must take into account the structural characteristics of those different societies. For example, in the US, migration precedes the idea of nation-state. On the contrary, in Europe, even if the idea of "Nation" is dominant over the centuries, mass migration occurs only in the mid of 18th century¹⁷.

The basic overview of this model is that society is not culturally homogeneous but comprises different specificities of different groups and by extension policies of Multiculturalism, encourage the preservation of cultural traditions and historical data of different groups and stress the unity through diversity. The result of these policies is to establish a society that is multicultural but each group lives on relatively isolated from the other group¹⁸. However, such multicultural society is not successful, because on the one hand it recognizes the distinct elements, but on the other hand it consolidates dividing lines, reproduces all the distinctive cultural / ethnic features and puts aside the basic social and economic factor¹⁹.

Education sector recognizes for every child the necessity of knowledge of national culture and national tradition, as a precondition for the improvement

¹⁶ The immigrants, who were of European origin, emigrated to the US for permanent settlement and therefore the definition of "immigrant" had not a negative charge, unlike of what happened later in Europe. However, beyond the epiphenomen, the "melting pot" is a selective process and it is built upon racist bases and standards, since it excludes from the merging procedure blacks and Latinos, creating a separatist state, with first and second class citizens (the WASP model: White AngloSaxon Protestant).

¹⁷ In the western-European democratic countries, where the idea of Nation predates the idea of State, and where, from about the middle of the last century, countries were transformed from colonial to immigration countries, the dominant perception of Intercultural education and its characteristics is significantly different from the relevant case in the US. More on the relationship of European countries with their former colonies and the establishing discrimination. Balibar E., 1988, p.130, Lorcerie F., 2003, p. 58-59, Elias N, 1991, p. 273, King R., 2000, p. 4.

¹⁸ Markou., "Η πολυπολιτισμικότητα της ελληνικής κοινωνίας – Η διαδικασία διεθνοποίησης και η αναγκαιότητα της διαπολιτισμικής εκπαίδευσης", 1996, ΓΓΛΕ, pp. 13-14.

¹⁹ Abdallah-Preteille M., "L'éducation interculturelle, éditions PUF", première édition 1999, 2004, deuxième édition révisée, pp. 31-34.

of ‘school performance’ and the elimination of discrimination in educational opportunities. In this context, educational curricula are taking into account the linguistic and cultural activities of migrants’ children and their aim is to cultivate to all students the idea of respect and tolerance for people with different ethnic, cultural, racial and religious origin. Since the basic parameter for social phenomena is not only the dominant culture, but every culture separately and all together as a whole, children are taught to respect all cultures.

- D) The ‘‘Antiracist’’ model. This model was developed in the mid and end of the 80s mainly in England and America. The ‘‘Antiracist’’ model is focused on the institutions and the structures of the society and its main key objectives are mentioned as follows : 1) to ensure equality in education for all children regardless of their ethnic / racial origin, something which involves the transformation of the structures and systems that favor inequality, 2) justice that the state must show to all and 3) emancipation and liberation from racist standards²⁰.
- E) ‘‘Intercultural’’ model. The idea of ‘‘Interculturalism’’ came up as an imperative necessity in modern times, both because of the vast population movements and the question of ethics and democratic legitimacy of assimilatory approaches. More specifically, in the area of Education, it is considered that Intercultural education is the pedagogical response to the problems that arise in a multicultural and multiethnic society. The basic principles of Interculturalism are: a) training for awareness, b) education solidarity, c) education for intercultural respect, d) training against the nationalist way of thinking. According to Damanakis, when analyzing the Intercultural approach we can mention three ‘‘axioms’’ -principles of Intercultural theory: a) the axiom of the equivalence of cultures, b) the axiom of the parity of the educational capital of people with different cultural backgrounds and c) the postulate of equal opportunities²¹.

²⁰ Georgogiannis P., “Θέματα διαπολιτισμικής εκπαίδευσης”, Gutenberg, 1999, pp. 49.

²¹ Damanakis M., “Η εκπαίδευση των παλινοστούτων και αλλοδαπών μαθητών στην Ελλάδα. Διαπολιτισμική προσέγγιση”, 1997, Gutenberg, p. 103.

Without implying that there are big discrepancies in essence of the above classification, according to a research conducted in parts of Europe (Holland, England, Scotland, Denmark, Sweden, Belgium, Germany, Spain, France), it was demonstrated that intercultural educational practices can be described in four submodels, although, as I have already mentioned, there are cases, where a combination is applied. Also, it was observed that, even though it is used a common terminology, the practices applied are in practice completely different and in fact they are dissimilar models which have advantages and disadvantages²².

- 1) The adaptive model. On the basis that society is homogeneous and contains only one culture, this model assumes that children from ethnic minorities will learn the dominant language and culture as quickly as possible, therefore, the teaching method does not give any particular attention to the cultural background of the children, but instead emphasizes in the dominant culture, with the ultimate goal to "adapt these children".
- 2) The transitional model. In this case the aim is the same with the previous model, but at the same time, the State should take measures, in order to facilitate the transition from family to the dominant culture.
- 3) The contact model. This model focuses less on the adaptation of national minorities and more on the promotion of contact between children and people from different cultural environments. In this kind of education, the aim is the children to accept others and the teaching practice to prevent prejudices and discrimination.
- 4) The cultural change model. Here, it is not required any adaptation for national minorities. Each culture has its own achievements, and on this basis will be used all the features that will help more the children. Thus, a new mixture of culture emerges, in which all the different cultural backgrounds will coexist.

²² Vandenbroeck M., "Με τη ματιά του Γέτι. Η καλλιέργεια του σεβασμού του «άλλου» στην εκπαίδευση", Μετάφραση Γ. Βογιατζής, Χ., Γεμελιάρης, Επιμέλεια Α. Χουντουμάδη, Α Βαφέα, 2004, Τετράδια 12 νήσος, pp. 110-112..

1.3. International legal framework for the child.

Children's right to life, to protection from all kinds of danger and to education are enshrined by International Contracts. With the International Contract for the Children's Rights that was signed in New York on the 26th January in 1990 and ratified in Greece, a child is considered every human being under 18 years old. In the article 2 it is defined that: "The contributing states are obliged to respect the rights that are mentioned in the present Contract and to guarantee to every child that is under their jurisdiction, without any discrimination in race, color, gender, language, religion, political beliefs -or their parents/legal representatives' beliefs, their national or social origins, their financial status, their possible disabilities, their birth or any other condition"²³.

Within the 54 articles of the Contract, which were unanimously ratified by the General Assembly of the UN on the 20/11/1989, all the children's rights are defined and in many of them, there is a special mention to the children that come from minorities within the states' borders that might have signed the Contract, guaranteeing their cultural and minority rights. As far as education is concerned, it is defined that every child has the right to education, which is recognized as an international human right of vital meaning for the children's growth.²⁴ Especially for the children-refugees it is recognized that they require double protection as long as they are both children and refugees, the UN High Commission for the Refugees has adopted the "Policies for the Children Refugees" that was ratified in the Executive Commission of the UN in October 1993, in order to strengthen the protection and care for the children. In this policy they were embodied the directives of the High Commission for the children-refugees and it was firstly

²³ https://treaties.un.org/pages/ViewDetails.aspx?src=IND&mtdsg_no=IV-11&chapter=4&lang=en

²⁴ All the Contract is found at www.unicef.com

published in 1988. A directive for the children-refugees had already been included in the Contract of 1951 for the “Refugees Status”²⁵. As far as education is concerned there is a clear directive (no.22) that obliges the country that offers asylum to offer education to the refugees as well.

Even though the directives exist at international level there are, almost every day, incidents of children being exploited at work or any other kind of exploitation. Especially in the educational matter, researches in various countries have shown that most of those children is not provided with even the basic education. According to estimations, a small percentage that is not over 30% of those children has access to education. The Universal Declaration for the education of all people (Thailand 1990-Jomtien) reaches the outcome that “The refugees have no access to education” and this is why there is a basic target of “reaching the basic global education at a percentage of not less of 80%”²⁶. Researches and studies on the educational policy on refugees’ children in the traditional host countries, including Greece of course, have shown that the refugees appear to have high percentages of educational lack²⁷.

1.4. European Legal Framework on Education.

The bases for a common line in the European policies on education have already been set by the European Contract for Culture that was ratified in 1954 by the council of Europe²⁸.

In this framework of the European Contract for Culture there are four commissions which act in the sector of education and culture: i) the Executive Commission on Education ii) the Executive Commission on higher education iii) the Executive Commission on Culture and iv) the Executive Commission on Cultural

²⁵ https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/e-library/docs/pdf/transfer_protection_status_rev_160904_en.pdf

²⁶ High Commission of the UN on Refugees, 197, pp. 109-111.

²⁷ Tzortzopoulou M. and Kotzamani A., “ Η ΕΚΠΑΙΔΕΥΣΗ ΤΩΝ ΑΛΛΟΔΑΠΩΝ ΜΑΘΗΤΩΝ ΔΙΕΡΕΥΝΗΣΗ ΤΩΝ ΠΡΟΒΛΗΜΑΤΩΝ ΚΑΙ ΤΗΣ ΠΡΟΟΠΤΙΚΗΣ ΕΠΙΛΥΣΗΣ ΤΟΥΣ”, National Centre For Social Research, Working Papers 2008/9, Athens, pp. 24-25.

²⁸ <https://rm.coe.int/09000016805db3dc>

Heritage. Those four commissions maintain close cooperation with the European Ministers of Education and Culture and their work contributes to the realization of three basic targets²⁹:

1. The defense, strengthening and promotion of the human rights, the foundational freedoms and the pluralistic democracy.
2. The strengthening of a European identity conception.
3. The search of common answers to the significant challenges that the European societies face.

Their actions are also extended to the support of newer states in order to harmonize their educational systems according to the European rules. Regarding the strategies of an educational renewal, especially into the framework of laws and foundations of education, the citizens' identity or the teaching of history, those four Commissions care to turn the plans into actions. The geographic areas of Southeastern Europe and the ex-Soviet countries are the ones of higher priority.

In general, the Education policy of the EU is placed in the broader framework of the right to particularity, the equal treatment and the equal rights. However, although most of the EU countries act according to this framework in regards to the refugees' children integration, there still are significant differences among them. Some countries have great experience in the integration policies while some others are experiencing this challenge for the first time and seek for the appropriate policies and educational regulations. Another important factor that influences the policies of a country is that each country has a different history and exercises its policies under different social and financial conditions, as a result, the common educational policy of the EU has to face a difficulty in the common composition of the various particularities of each country.

The first and basic regulation of the EU on the education of the refugees' children is the Council's Directive of the 25th July 1977 which referred only to the children of immigrant workers from countries within the EU borders. According to this Directive, special measures are applied for the integration of those children into the host country's educational system and at the same time there are in school courses

²⁹ Ibid.

of the local language and the culture³⁰. From November 2003, there was an expansion to the rights of the refugees' children that come from third countries outside the EU but under specific terms³¹. Moreover, it is obligatory for the countries that joined the EU in 2004 to adapt their legal framework and policies regarding the education of the refugees' children accordingly³².

However, in the general area of the EU policy there are not any additional measures for the normal integration of the refugees' children in the host country's educational system as there is no tendency to readapt the framework to the current needs. This framework is rather restricted in setting targets and future lines as long as it projects as an ideal the European student, enhancing in this way the racial distinction among the children. There is a total ignorance regarding the historical need for a model of intercultural education that will set at a level of equality all the cultural particularities of the students regardless their religion or their cultural or national origins. This tendency is pretty much shown also in the history courses where it emphasizes on the European history, ignoring the other civilizations outside the European borders³³.

In 1999, in the meeting of the EU prime ministers in Tampere, focusing on the common policies on asylum and immigration, some directives regarding the refugees' children of the countries outside the EU borders entered into force. Even though those directives are not turned into states' obligations, they have the advantage that include the illegal immigrants' children, even the children that are coming in the EU states with their parents or the children that were born in a host country, without any specific definition on their legality of their staying. In those texts there are recommendations for the member states to adapt their educational systems to the

³⁰ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/ALL/?uri=CELEX%3A31977L0486>

³¹ This right is obtained after 5 years of continuous and legal stay in the country, as long as the immigrant is able to support their own financial condition without taking any third factor's help. The EU states maintain the right to ask from those children to show the documents that confirm their knowledge of the language in order to be integrated in the educational system. There is no reference to the illegal immigrants' children. Also there is no positive support measure for those children. Directive 2003/109/CE, articles 4 and 5.

³² <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/ALL/?uri=CELEX:52005DC0389>

³³ [http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/etudes/join/1998/167225/DG-4-CULT_ET\(1998\)167225_EN.pdf](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/etudes/join/1998/167225/DG-4-CULT_ET(1998)167225_EN.pdf) and www.coe.int.

special needs of those children, to enter language and cultural courses of the countries of origin and to promote the intercultural education about all the students.³⁴

In 2012 it took place in Greece the summit on Education, Youth and Culture during which the representative of Greece in the European Commission, Mr. Peroulakis, announced the three basic aims were set regarding all children who live and are educated in the EU member states, especially the immigrants' children as they are the ones that may face more difficulties on school, for example in the language of the host country learning, a fact that is enough to cause problems at first in reading and writing and as a result a possible abandoning of the educational process. Those three aims that each member state should complete are³⁵:

1. The average of the young people to flee from the educational system of Europe must be under 10%
2. At least the 85% of the young people up to the age of 22 in the EU must have finished the secondary education.
3. The percentage of young people up to 15 years of age that do not perform satisfying enough in reading and writing should be reduced 20% at least, compared to older official percentages³⁶.

Those targets should sensitize the member states in order to take measures regarding the children who face difficulties on their education, among them included the refugees' children. At the same time, the European Commission will watch the national policies on immigration that are adopted by the member states. Furthermore, the intelligence and the cooperation among the EU countries when it comes to the measures on immigrants' integration should be enhanced. Moreover, the European Commission has the commitment to annually redact a report on those policies course in which they will be included measures for the learning of the host country's language and the integration in the social, cultural and political life of the country.

³⁴ This information comes from the research "L'integration scolaire des enfants immigrants en Europe" conducted by the Eurydice and was published in 2004.

http://www.indire.it/lucabas/lkmw_file/eurydice/Integrating_immigrant_children_2004_FR.pdf

³⁵ http://www.teachers4europe.gr/images/call-2012-2013/educational-content/education_policies_EU.ppt

³⁶ Ibid.

In addition, related to the intercultural education, it is highlighted by the EU the need for intercultural and interreligious dialogue. However from theory to action these official targets meet significant problems as far as the ways of their realization are concerned, sometimes even leading to contradictory results³⁷.

1.5. From ‘Multiculturalism’ to ‘Interculturalism’. A Historical Overview.

The plurality of human groups is translated at the material level by the diversity of their geographic settlements and by differences of ancestral ethnic origin. At the cultural level this plurality is explained by linguistic and religious diversity and historical collective memory: a conceptual set of features known as cultural identity³⁸. Throughout the centuries, the settlement of different groups in well-defined territories where they became majorities gave rise to the creation of nations. These nations presented a certain degree of homogeneity as far as the above-mentioned material and conceptual characteristics were concerned. Whenever their stability and safety involved the establishment of sovereign regions, externally recognized as such and exercised within their respective territories, these nations became States³⁹.

The reciprocal relations between State and Nation were not always established nor did they always prevail. Invasions, wars and treaties, as well as massive population movements, put an end to them and led to the co-existence of several nations within the same State. Colonial occupations also produced similar consequences. Many of these situations are now stable and it is common for a country to have several regions, differentiated by major nationalities and cultures. These nationalities and cultures have diverse characteristics in regard to language, religion, or ethnic origin. The

³⁷ Tzortzopoulou M. and Kotzamani A., “ Η ΕΚΠΑΙΔΕΥΣΗ ΤΩΝ ΑΛΛΟΔΑΠΩΝ ΜΑΘΗΤΩΝ ΔΙΕΡΕΥΝΗΣΗ ΤΩΝ ΠΡΟΒΛΗΜΑΤΩΝ ΚΑΙ ΤΗΣ ΠΡΟΟΠΤΙΚΗΣ ΕΠΙΛΥΣΗΣ ΤΟΥΣ”, National Centre For Social Research, Working Papers 2008/19, Athens, pp. 28-29.

³⁸ Moha Ennaji, Multilingualism, Cultural Identity, and Education in Morocco, Springer Science & Business Media, 2005, pp.19-23.

³⁹ Balibar, E. and Valerstein, I. , “Race, nation, classe. Les identités ambiguës, 1990, Paris, , pp.25-43..

creation of semi-autonomous regions with a certain degree of self-government (e.g. the region of Western Thrace in Greece with a vast Muslim minority⁴⁰) is a sound solution to potential conflicts among the several socio-political forces operating within the same State. In other cases such conflicts may develop into major confrontations or even civil wars leading to fragmentation of the State.

So far a type of conceptual situation has been described that is clear cut, where each culture may be considered fairly homogeneous in a clearly defined territory. However, there are exceptions, including situations such as frequent international migrations where the permanence of the movement leads to the settlement of foreign minority communities in the host countries. There are also post-decolonization situations that leave a remnant of residents from previous colonial power in the new independent countries, thus originating other types of minorities. It should also be noted that post-colonial situations usually produce migratory movements from the new States towards the previous imperial powers. This does not constitute a return migratory flow but in a way conveys a closing of the circle of bilateral mobility⁴¹.

Moving from these generalized historical frameworks, it is important to analyse the present and to project the current tendencies into the future. In many countries in Europe it is evident that there are communities of migratory origin, sometimes in significant numbers and whose differences become noteworthy. Within the European Union there have recently been several waves of individuals who have joined immigration movements for economic reasons. There are political or war refugees from African, Asian, Middle Eastern, Central and Eastern European countries presently experiencing volatile situations. These mass movements will often increase drastically when a generalized famine situation occurs in one of these countries⁴².

In spite of efforts to limit the entry of newcomers, the already settled minorities represent a very significant presence which needs to be taken into consideration in any political project. This is valid at the European Community level as well as at that of each State aiming at the well-being of and social justice for all elements of the resident population.

⁴⁰http://nestor.teipel.gr/xmlui/bitstream/handle/123456789/15822/SDO_DMTA_00176_Medium.pdf?sequence=1

⁴¹ Ruth Craggs, Claire Wintle, "Cultures of Decolonization", Transnational Productions and Practices, 2016, Manchester University Press, pp. 155-170.

⁴² <http://en.ejo.ch/research/research-how-europes-newspapers-reported-the-migration-crisis>

Any political project designed to deal with this situation cannot be based upon goals of integration/assimilation of the minority groups in the majority societies. During the last four decades the American ‘melting pot’ dream has lost its credibility. The ‘Multicultural’ approaches, which may be defined as a diversified set of different communities, whose interaction and social mobility are not necessarily taking place, also provide incomplete solutions⁴³. Intercultural perspectives may well have more beneficial consequences. The term aims to convey a dynamic state of permanent interaction among present cultures. In order to achieve the good communications on which it depends it is necessary always to keep in mind two realities-universality and diversity.

If one attempts to express the differences among the three previously mentioned approaches in another manner, one would delineate:

- An ethno-centric character to be the idealized concept of the ‘melting-pot’ as it promotes the rule of generic culture as a result of the fusion of all present cultures.
- An ethno-plural character to the Multicultural perspective based on a verified judgment of plurality.
- An ethno-interactive character to the Multicultural vision brought about by a logic of contact, interpenetration and mutual influence of cultures for the approach of interculturalism.

Intercultural education is the action medium, the tool which results from this concept. The expression includes in the term ‘education’, all the components of formal and non-formal teaching or community education and of all the other processes of organized social interaction aiming at the education of the individual. It also, therefore, includes the State’s pedagogical role in the production of rules and laws and the role played by the media in the shaping of public opinion⁴⁴.

With the economic development that took place following World War II, specifically from the 1960s onwards, the industrialized European countries welcomed

⁴³ Kenan Malik, “ The Failure of Multiculturalism, Community Versus Society in Europe”, April 2015 at <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/western-europe/failure-multiculturalism>

⁴⁴ Νικολαου G., “Διαπολιτισμική Διδακτική. Το νέο περιβάλλον – Βασικές αρχές”, 2005, Αθήνα: Ελληνικά Γράμματα, pp. 7-12.

the arrival of foreign workers from diversified cultural and linguistic backgrounds searching for better working and living conditions. Since then, the educational systems of the host-countries have been continuously receiving a large number of students from immigrant families. These families of diversified origins were faced with great adaptation difficulties of a social, cultural and linguistic nature. Consequently, those difficulties were also reflected in their children's academic success⁴⁵.

In the United States the studies of Bilingual Programs were limited to language teaching and in practice they assumed a remedial methodology. In Canada the Heritage Language Programs were conceived in response to local social circumstances. The cultures present were individualized but the programs did not contemplate social interaction. In practice these educational policies proved inadequate to the needs of European countries due to the diversity of situations present in the heterogeneous character of the target populations⁴⁶.

Notwithstanding a previous practice of pedagogy which included several cultures involved in the educational process it became necessary to develop and to implement educational projects and experiences that comprised⁴⁷:

- Actions developed by the educational authorities of the country of origin and the host country.
- Permanent information to all teaching agents concerned with the social, cultural and educational realities involved in the education of migrant populations.
- A commitment on the part of the institutions in charge of the education and training of teachers, either in the host-countries or in the countries of origin.
- The organization of studies applying the knowledge acquired in the area of Human and Social Sciences to the teaching of migrant populations.

⁴⁵ Christian Dustmann and Tommaso Frattini, "Immigration: The European Experience", NORFACE MIGRATION Discussion Paper No. 2012-01 at http://www.norface-migration.org/publ_uploads/NDP_01_12.pdf

⁴⁶ Toulas I. , "Η Διαπολιτισμική και Πολιπολιτισμική Αγωγή στην Ελλάδα, Μύθος και πραγματικότητα.", 2005, Αθήνα, Εκδόσεις Διόνικος, pp. 57-66.

⁴⁷ Mitakidou S. , Tressou E. , Blue Swadener B. , Grant C. , "Beyond Pedagogies of Exclusion in Diverse Childhood Contexts", Transnational Challenges, 2009, Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 101-131.

Moreover, the pioneering role played by the Council of Europe throughout the 1970s should be stressed. As early as 1970 (Resolution 70/35 of the Council of Europe Committee of Ministers) and following the concerns felt by the institutions which implemented the education of migrants' descendants, the Member States were alerted to the situation in migrant communities and to the need to eliminate the difficulties of social and academic adaptation experienced by students of migrant origin. They were also alerted to the advantage of maintaining cultural and linguistic ties with the country of origin as well as to prepare their reintegration should those students ever decide to go back⁴⁸.

In 1975 (IX Permanent Conference of European Ministers of Education⁴⁹) all concerned Governments were invited to take measures aiming at promoting equal educational opportunities for migrant children as well as providing them with the possibility of learning the language and culture of the host country and of their country of origin. It was at about this time that the initiatives of the European Community concerning education in a multicultural context started to be observed. In 1977 the Council of Ministers of the European Community in accordance with Directive 77/486/EEC of July 25, adopted the following guidelines⁵⁰:

- To provide equal opportunities for basic education to the children of migrants.
- To provide courses on the language of the host-country using methodologies adequate to students.
- To organize courses on the language and culture of the country of origin with the collaboration of all countries involved whenever possible.
- To implement educational programs from an intercultural perspective.

Once the need to act was recognized and using the guidelines established by the Council of Ministers of the Community and by the Council of Europe, this latter organization assembled a working group (1977-1983) coordinated by a Swiss

⁴⁸ Council of Europe, Resolution 70/35 at <https://rm.coe.int/CoERMPublicCommonSearchServices/DisplayDCTMContent?documentId=09000016804bd244>

⁴⁹ Previous Standing Conferences of Ministers of Education at <http://www.coe.int/en/web/education-minister-conference/previous-conferences>

⁵⁰ Council of Ministers Directive 1977 at <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A31977L0486>

researcher, Micheline Rey, to study the said guidelines and the issue of teacher training⁵¹. Teacher training was designed to:

- Make teachers aware of the practice of education in Multicultural societies.
- Introduce teachers both from the host-countries and from the countries of origin to the cultures involved as well as their respective teaching systems.
- Incorporate in basic training and in continuous training the Intercultural perspective.
- Implement the organization of seminars and courses on Intercultural education, addresses to teachers and other teaching agents.
- Create training courses, documentation and continuous in-service teacher training, as for example the CEFISEM did in France.

The Ministers of the Member States participating in the Council of Europe approved Recommendation (84)18 concerning teachers' training for the education and full comprehension of Interculturalism, namely in migratory contexts which reinforced previous initiatives. Following the already mentioned Project, a new one was launched- The Education and Cultural Development of Migrants Project 7 (1983-1986)⁵². The main guidelines contained in the original document (CDCC's Project Group No. 7 doc. CDCCC (84)10), Which provided a basis for all actions subsequently in Europe at an international level state:

- By now most of our societies are multicultural and will become increasingly so.
- Each culture has its own specific features, to be respected as such.
- Multiculturalism is an asset.
- To make Multiculturalism an asset is reality, we must achieve communication and interaction between all the cultures without obliterating the specific identity of any, and we must mobilize the multicultural situation to make it truly Intercultural, with all the dynamism which this implies (in terms of communication and interaction especially).

⁵¹ Micheline Rey-Von Allmen, " Training Teachers in Intercultural Education?: The Work of the Council for Cultural Co-operation (1977-83)", Council of Europe, 1986.

⁵² Jean-Michel Leclercq, " Facets of interculturality in education", Council of Europe Publishing, 2003.

If we compare the characteristics of the positions assumed by the Council of Europe and by the European Community (now the European Union) regarding Intercultural Policy issues, it is evident that the Council of Europe is quite explicit concerning the concept, the description of the contexts and the launching of Projects and initiatives aimed at the development of Intercultural Education. The European Union has broader objectives revealing implicitly a concern with European construction and integration processes. Thus, the European Union promotes Intercultural Education in an implicit manner through its broad range of Programs.

Programs such as LINGUA, ERASMUS, DELTA and TEMPUS (to name but a few) have produced results throughout the years. They aim to introduce cultural communication into the education and training of European populations, acknowledging their respective diversities and attempting to make them interact to promote a better mutual understanding.

In 1989 the Council of Ministers of Education discussed issues relating to co-operation and community policies for 1993 in the area of education (89/C27/04). The result was the establishment of five main objectives considered by the Member States as capable of promoting their closeness in the subjects of education and training⁵³:

- A multicultural Europe.
- A Europe of mobility.
- A Europe of training for all.
- A Europe of skills.
- A Europe open to the World.

Subsequently the Treaty of the European Union, known as the Treaty of Maastricht (February 1992), dedicated three articles (Articles 126, 127 and 128)to Education, Vocational Training and Youth.⁵⁴ Hence, an integrated policy is clearly defined, aimed at deriving better knowledge of the educational systems and encouraging the exchange of teachers and students. This knowledge is not limited to the European

⁵³ file:///C:/Users/User/Downloads/BX5890910ENC_001.pdf

⁵⁴ Gerard McCann & Peter Finn, " Identifying the European dimension in citizenship education", Global Citizenship, Autumn 2006 at <http://www.developmenteducationreview.com/issue/issue-3/identifying-european-dimension-citizenship-education>

Union's political borders, but is extended to other countries and international organizations.

The acknowledgement of different historical paths, of rich national cultural heritages and of the plurality of artistic expressions in European society introduced courses of action in pedagogy directed by reciprocal knowledge and opening routes to pedagogical innovation. For instance, distance teaching is mentioned as a feasible innovative route to the achievement of all these goals. The interest in different aspects of Interculturalism expressed by international organizations such as UNESCO and OECD should also be stressed. Diverse cultural initiatives (seminars, conferences, publications) are dedicated particularly to the Intercultural Education of young people and adults.

Intercultural Education is nowadays acknowledged as an adequate methodological strategy concerning the plurality of cultures that co-exist in the European social context. Its educational and training potential with the intent to manage the tensions among the several resident groups and communities is accomplished through the reinforcement of communication among cultures aimed at attaining a constructive interaction and a mutual knowledge and respect for their differences and specificities.

1.6. Multicultural or Intercultural Education? A conceptualization of Education policies.

Multiculturalism indicates a stream of thinking and awareness or acceptance of a cultural diversity as a European reality. It indicates an existence of both traditional autochthonic minorities and new immigrants and refugees groups. Multiculturalism means a tolerance to "other and different" neither fighting nor objecting the existence of a cultural diversity. It reflects a neutral attitude to cultural diversities⁵⁵.

Multicultural education is a current term used frequently without being cleared up. An interpretation of a meaning of this term makes difficulties. If we try to explain

⁵⁵ Perotti A. , "The case for intercultural education", Council of Europe Press, 1994, pp. 34-35.

both parts of the composed term we find its internal controversies: Education is an international active life long process of a human cultivation and a permanent finding identity in a changing environment. The concept of Multiculturalism means either ‘education in a multicultural society’ or ‘education based on multicultural ground’’. Both ways of interpretation do not support the concept expressing intentions or prospects. In fact multicultural education could block education or education could damage Multiculturality. The power or weakness of them depends on a vitality or a resistance of both culture and education.

A more hopeful concept is Intercultural education. The concept respects a validity of different cultures as equal and reflects a positive attitude to cultural interaction. A principle of interaction is based on encounter of cultures supporting a human inquiry and creativity, enrichment and progress. It is based on reciprocity and dialogue. A comparison is a very important attribute of Interculturalism.

Intercultural education is an international process taking into account both human commonalities and discovering or recognizing cultural diversities. The stratum of intercultural education are human, moral and spiritual values. The danger in education should be considered if moral values are avoided and economic, social or cultural inequality are to be dominant axis of education⁵⁶.

Spiritual and moral value oriented Intercultural education is a perspective concept of ‘learning to be and to live’ in a multicultural society and to recognize the sense and meaning of different cultures. It is clear that the core of Intercultural education is the concept of culture. Culture is learned and is shared by society. It is concerned with ideas, values, attitudes and behaviors. It is also accepted that culture changes as shared idea, values, attitudes and behaviors change/modify as a result of interaction among members of a defined cultural group and between members of different cultural groups. Thus, culture as a dynamic process changes because of its own internal dynamics and in relation to other cultures.

The main problem in Intercultural Education is how to make cultural groups accept and understand views, values and behaviors differing from their own. Such cross-cultural encounters often create friction, tension and conflict. It may even reveal

⁵⁶ Perotti A. , “The case for intercultural education”, Council of Europe Press, 1994, pp. 91-102.

ethnocentrism, xenophobia and pressure from the dominant group for assimilation. Proponents of intercultural education argue that it brings up people who are capable of assessing alternative values and view of life critically. In order to reduce ethnocentrism we need to know how people view the world around them which consists of individuals belonging to various cultural groups⁵⁷.

The goal of Intercultural education is not simply to recognize and appreciate cultural diversity in society. Intercultural education is a new dimension which should permeate every component of European education including the content and process of education. In this concern educationalists are on the beginning of a long way toward open society of citizens. European citizens should be flexible and mobile, protecting a cultural heritage and developing common perspectives through encounter, communication and interaction. The education system therefore, based on the idea of Interculturalism, ought to develop curricula and pedagogies that integrate an understanding of cultural process and cultural continuity and changes within a framework of national identity.

It is easy to argue that education should not be held responsible for inequality of various forms in society, since this is beyond its direct control, particularly the socio-economic structure of society. Nonetheless, it is true that education can play an important role in leading the battle against inequality.

⁵⁷ Schuck Peter H., " The Perceived Values of Diversity, Then and Now", Yale Law School Faculty Scholarship, 1-1-2001, pp. 3-25.

CHAPTER 2

2. Intercultural Education Policy in Greece.

We have already mentioned that Intercultural policy in Education, is viewed as the best response to the new educational reality, although modern societies apply more combinatorial models⁵⁸. Additionally, all the applications of Interculturalism appear to be directly related to the emergence of immigration, as well as to the characteristics of the host society.

In Greece, the first Intercultural education has emerged in response to the presence of substantial numbers of returning ethnic Greeks⁵⁹ and in smaller numbers, foreign immigrants, whose children must be educated in Greek schools. This is the development which prompted debate on ‘Intercultural Education’ in Greece back in the 1980’s.

From this debate there ‘suddenly’ emerged a realization of the need to support another population group with its own distinctive features, which had long been present in Greece but had received little serious attention from the educational system. The call went out for action to be taken on the education of Romany children. At the

⁵⁸ In Greece, politicians and academics use the term “Intercultural Education” in their speeches. Consequently, the definition refers both for analytical reasons to Educational policy and educational practice, and also in regulatory ratio around the same areas, which creates confusion about the orientation of Interculturalism. It, thus emerges the question whether the term ‘Interculturalism’ is a label, that may indicate scientific discourse, educational practice or Education policy; Moreover, the concepts Intercultural Action, Intercultural Education and Intercultural Pedagogy used as synonyms although they are different. A Gotovos., 1998, p. 24, and 2002, pp. 55-57.

⁵⁹ During the 1980’s, hundreds of thousands of ethnic Greeks from different countries have been migrating to Greece. One category refers to Greeks who had emigrated to the United States, Canada, Australia, Germany and other European nations, and who decided to repatriate. A second category refers to the Pontic Greeks of the former Soviet Union, who have been migrating to Greece after the breakup of the Soviet Union. These are ethnic Greeks, descendants of the ancient Hellenic communities of the southern shores of the Black Sea, who have retained the Greek culture, language, religion, customs, throughout 20 centuries, but have never lived in Greece. A third category refers to the ethnic Greeks from Albania, mostly from Northern Epirus, an area on the border of Northern Greece which became part of Albania after the breakup of the Ottoman Empire at the beginning of the century. After the fall of the Communist regime, many ethnic Greeks from Albania migrated to Greece for economic reasons, many of them employed as migrant agriculture workers or laborers

same time, the first steps were taken towards a more scientific approach to minority education, which was implemented on the basis of the educational protocols of 1954 and 1968⁶⁰.

Since then, the state, with the support and guidance of the academic community, has gradually introduced a series of legislative measures and practical applications, subjected to ongoing evaluation and improvement, targeting the various different population groups and attempting to accommodate their own specific needs. The implementation of the Intercultural Policy begins with the establishment of Reception classes (1980-1981) and Preparatory Courses (1982-1983) to address these problems. Since then, the foundation and operation of Reception classes and Preparatory courses is regulated by laws and decrees. In the new immigration law (3386/05) and in particular in Article 72, have been regulated issues relating to the access of 'foreign' students in education. More specifically it is stated that⁶¹:

1. Foreign minors residing in Greek territory, subject to the basic requirement of minimum schooling, as nationals.
2. Foreign minors who are studying at all levels of the educational system, have unrestricted access to school activities or to the whole educational community.
3. Foreign minors should be enrolled in public schools and they should present all the required domestic documents.
4. Foreigners who have graduated from secondary education in Greece, they have access to university education under the same terms and conditions as nationals.

The new Law entails a provision for foreigners, who under certain circumstances it is not possible to have documents, so, at least at institutional level, the learning process of all the aliens is facilitated. In the same article, special reference is given to the children of refugees, which can be admitted to public schools even without the necessary documents (such as birth certificates, certificate of school attendance, etc.),

⁶⁰ Terzis Nikos P., "Intercultural Education in the Balkan Countries", Balkan Society for Pedagogy and Education, 2004, Thessaloniki, Kyriakidis Brothers, pp. 42-43.

⁶¹ Tzortzopoulou M. and Kotzamani A., " Η εκπαίδευση των αλλοδαπών μαθητών. Διερεύνηση των προβλημάτων και της προοπτικής επίλυσής τους", National Centre For Social Research, Working Papers 2008/19, Athens, pp. 29-30.

because they usually are not able to carry them from their home country. In particular, documents are not essential for children who⁶²:

- a. They are protected by the Greek state as refugees or persons under the protection of UNHCR United Nations.
- b. They come from areas where the situation is unsettled.
- c. They have applied for asylum.
- d. Reside in Greece even if their legitimate residence has not been regulated yet⁶³.

Furthermore the Greek State has created a platform for the recognition of qualifications that foreigners acquired in the country of their origin. The National Minister of Education holds the jurisdiction to determine the terms and conditions for the recognition of such qualification titles and lays down all the requirements for the classification of the student population into the relevant levels of Greek educational system. Moreover, by decision of the Minister of Education, may be arranged optional language courses of the mother tongue and cultural courses, where a sufficient number of interested pupils arises, and also may be regulated issues related to the employment relationship and the qualifications of teachers who teach the native language and culture of the students' country of origin⁶⁴.

Relevant issues to religion such as participation of non-Orthodox students in the Orthodox congregation and attendance of the Religious lessons are regulated by the Presidential Decree "Organization and functioning of primary schools" (Presidential Decree 201/1998, FEK 161 sq. A / 13/7/98 Art. 13 paragraph 10). In this ordinance, students have the opportunity, respecting the choice of their parents, not to participate in church services or during the prayer in school. They can also be exempted from the course of Religion by decision of the school association and after the request of their parents they can indicate another religion or creed in their student documents⁶⁵.

To address the instructional needs of learning the Greek language, it was and it is still used a special teaching material (OEΔB- the organization responsible for the

⁶² Ibid. pp 30-31.

⁶³ Another category of children are those who are unaccompanied.

⁶⁴ Toulas I. , "Η Διαπολιτισμική και Πολιπολιτισμική Αγωγή στην Ελλάδα, Μύθος και πραγματικότητα.", 2005, Αθήνα, Εκδόσεις Διόνικος, pp. 157-160.

⁶⁵ Ibid. , pp. 160-161.

publication of books in public schools), which had been prepared to meet the needs of teaching the Greek language and the contact with Greek culture. In the theoretical framework for the production of the teaching material, addressed to the teacher, are being listed the main principles and objectives of the teaching material⁶⁶: The aim of the teaching materials is to contribute to the cultivation and promotion of the Greek language and Greek culture, so that the new generations will acquire an identity similar to the socio-cultural conditions of their socialization process, i.e. an Intercultural identity. It is also stated that this objective is affiliated to the general objectives of the Intercultural theory and accepts the three axioms-principles of Intercultural Education (1. the axiom of the equivalence of cultures, 2. axiom of the parity of the educational capital of people with different cultural backgrounds and 3. the postulate of equal opportunities)⁶⁷.

2.2. Applications of Intercultural Education Policy in Greece.

Education policy now is being implemented for the support at school and smooth integration of three population groups of students with special cultural characteristics: returning ethnic Greeks and foreigners, Gypsies and the Muslim minority in Thrace. Each of these broad categories can be broken up into sub-groups with varying cultural and/or linguistic and/or religious characteristics.

Intercultural education is currently being practice in Greece in the form of support measure and measures to facilitate the smooth integration of groups with different cultural identities. These measures were devised and introduced under the guidance of expert academics and researchers, whose main concern was to approach the needs of each of the three main groups separately rather than to adopt a comprehensive strategy for the intercultural coexistence of all students (including the native Greeks) in the educational system. The political leadership of the Greek Ministry of Education responds to these challenges through the 2413 Intercultural

⁶⁶ Τζορτζοπούλου Μ. and Κοτζαμάνι Α., " Η εκπαίδευση των αλλοδαπών μαθητών. Διερεύνηση των προβλημάτων και της προοπτικής επίλυσής τους", National Centre For Social Research, Working Papers 2008/19, Athens, pp.31-32.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

Education Act of 1996 and the School and Social Integration Programs for Repatriate, Migrant, Roma and Muslim children. The measures implemented by the Ministry of Education can be summarized briefly as follows⁶⁸:

- For the education of the returning ethnic Greek and foreign students: A flexible system of intervention in the individual school both within and outside the ordinary timetable. This will involve pitting the foreign-speaking students in a separate class for some hours of the week, the use of specialized material and team teaching with the assistance of a second teacher in the ‘regular’.
- For the education of Romany-Gypsy children: the operation of preparatory classes to ease integration of students, and the introduction of a ‘Romany student card’ which will accompany the student as his family move from place to place, making it easier to keep record of his progress and issue him with his final school-leaving certificate.
- Education of the Muslim minority in Western Thrace is based on the conditions of the Treaty of Lausanne and the various bilateral agreements and protocols signed by Greece and Turkey. Over recent years policies have involved raising the standard of staff in the minority schools and increasing the number of Muslim teachers, upgrading the religious schools, implementing a major program of school building construction and improvement, introducing a minimum quota of 1% access to higher education for Muslim students. The results of the educational policy for minority education over recent years have included a 70% increase in just 5 years in the percentage of Muslims attending state junior high schools.

From 1996 until today, they have been established and operate 26 schools intercultural education across Greece, of which 13 Primary schools, 9 Secondary schools, 4 High Schools. To qualify schools as ‘Intercultural schools’ should the number of repatriated and foreign student population to approach 45% of the total number of students. In intercultural schools are implemented the same curricula of the respective public schools, which are adapted to the specific educational, social, or

⁶⁸ http://6dim-diap-elfth.thess.sch.gr/nomothetiko_plaisio_diap_ekpshs.pdf

cultural needs of their students and the teachers have special qualifications⁶⁹. According to research studies, these schools have largely turned into “foreign schools” because Greek parents don’t choose these schools for the enrollment of their children fearing that cultural diversity and language distinctiveness of foreign students adversely affects the level of learning⁷⁰.

Under the same law, was established the Institute for the Greek Diaspora Education and Intercultural Studies (I.P.O.D.E.), as a necessary institution to foster intercultural education in Greek schools and Greek diaspora education. I.P.O.D.E. provides an important platform to respond effectively to this multicultural challenge⁷¹.

Furthermore, in 1996 was founded the Intercultural Education Center (KE.D.EK.) in the Department of Philosophy - Pedagogy - Psychology of the University of Patra, which is a University Center for the study of intercultural education issues at National and International level. The School and Social Integration Program for Repatriate and Migrant Students which is developed and currently applied by the Center for Intercultural Education of the University of Patra uses the intercultural approach as a frame of reference. It takes mainly intervention actions and its general aim is to create the appropriate conditions in order to ensure equal opportunities for access to education for all students. The basic objectives of the Schools and Social Integration Program comprise the following⁷²:

- The examination of the school and social conditions for repatriate and migrant students as well as the social, pedagogic and psychological factors which form an environment of positive/negative school performance of these students.
- The development and application of coordinated intervention measures fostering the facilitated integration of repatriate and migrant students in the educational system.
- The sensitization of teachers, students and parents regarding the principles that should govern a multicultural society, as well as the training of teachers and

⁶⁹ Tzortzopoulou M. and Kotzamani A., “ Η εκπαίδευση των αλλοδαπών μαθητών. Διερεύνηση των προβλημάτων και της προοπτικής επίλυσής τους”, National Centre For Social Research, Working Papers 2008/19, Athens, p. 32.

⁷⁰ Christodoulou T. , “ Μετανάστες και Διαπολιτισμική Εκπαίδευση στην Ελλάδα”, 12ο Διεθνές Συνέδριο - Πάτρα 19-21 Ιουνίου 2009, p. 289.

⁷¹ <http://dim-diapol-falir.att.sch.gr/ipode.htm>

⁷² <http://www1.upnet.gr/index/page/id/21/lang/en>

education officials on issues concerning the theoretical and practical dimensions of intercultural approaches in education.

- The development of theoretical elaboration, teaching material and methodological approaches which broaden the opportunities provided by the Greek educational system for repatriate and migrant students.

It is quite clear that in very short time considerable progress has been made and valuable work has been done in the field of Intercultural education. This does not account mean that since we are offering a certain level education to students of different cultural identities we have therefore attained our objectives. The multicultural character of Greek society is not a transient stage the country is passing through. The globalization which all the countries are experiencing in the form of a complex of technological, institutional, organizational, cultural and social changes is also influencing global migration. In the developed countries it is contributing to the marginalization of specific groups and favoring the development of anti-immigration- or even downright racist- attitudes. The role of intercultural education, as it is described in the bulk of the international and Greek literature, is directly linked with the existence of population groups with distinct cultural characteristics, and is often exclusively associated with smooth integration of these groups into school and society.

2.3 Legal Framework in Greece for Intercultural Education.

What is today called intercultural education in Europe, it refers to the time period between 1965 and 1980. In this time period, education and training of migrant children was considered problematic and in the logic of the “ hypothesis of deficit”. According to this hypothesis, the difference in the educational level of migrants and foreign students compared to that of the dominant group has created a deficit. It should therefore be "supplemented" by means of educational measures, and "assimilated" to that of local students. The pedagogical theory was only referred to foreigners. But in the 1980s hypothesis moved from the 'deficit case' to the ' case of difference '. In this case, the educational ‘ capital’ is considered different. This new approach, emerged to the principle of acceptance that someone is just “different” and led to the birth of Intercultural education .

European Council initiatives to ensure equal participation of minorities in the education and protection of their cultures and languages have played an important role in highlighting the need for an intercultural approach to education . Intercultural education has been progressively imposed in most European member States to define all methods of educational practice designed to foster mutual respect and mutual understanding among all students, no matter if they have linguistic, ethnic or religious differences .

In recent decades, the changes that have taken place in Eastern European countries in terms of population movements have allowed hundreds of thousands of Greeks to relocate to the countries of the former Soviet Union and, moreover, Greece is an intermediate or permanent destination for many people from neighboring Balkan countries, countries of Eastern Europe, Mediterranean, Asia and Africa. At the same time, although in accordance with current policy, immunity is granted sparingly to applicants, the existing social values make Greece a place of refuge for persons seeking asylum from the Greek authorities in order to avoid persecution, mistreatment or protection of their own lives.

Consequently, in line with the rapid socio-economic developments in Greece during the 1970s and 1980s, Greece was transformed from a country of emigration to a country of emigration. These changes created the need for wider socio-political changes. The smooth integration of repatriated and foreign students into the school community also required the necessary educational changes and reforms. This new reality, therefore, of a complex and diverse society, has led to the reorganization of the education system and the creation of Intercultural Education.

According to Markou the education system in Greece initially followed policies of assimilation and after 1995 was followed a systematic effort to integrate foreign students into the mainstream education system . Following the criticism of educational policy that prevailed until the early 1990s for the smooth integration of pupils of different linguistic and cultural backgrounds into the Greek education system, discussions and intense reflection led in turn to the adoption of new measures. Law 2413/96 set out the purpose of intercultural education for repatriated and foreign students and as a result intercultural education schools were established.

The legislative framework of Intercultural Education is essentially set out in Law 2413/1996 where Article 34 defines the purpose of intercultural education as "the organization and operation of primary and secondary education to provide education to young people with educational, social, cultural and literary educational peculiarities" ». It seems that the philosophy of law does not separate itself from the principles of the assimilation model, since it is addressed exclusively to pupils with "language deficits", even though at some points it recognizes - theoretically - the right to teach their mother tongue and their culture while it does not involve the whole student population, which should be the target of any intercultural approach.

The same law regulates a number of issues such as:

- 1) the establishment of the Directorate of Education of Expatriate Greeks and Intercultural Education, DIPODE, with responsibilities for overseeing Greek education abroad. The establishment of the Institute of Greek Education of Expatriates and Intercultural Education, IPODE, with the mission of promoting Greek education to expatriate Greeks, as well as the educational integration of foreign and immigrant students and students from socio-cultural environments, where they are excluded from education.
- 2) the renaming of the schools of the repatriated (formerly expatriates) to Intercultural Education Schools (Φ/10221/Γ1/1236, Φ.Ε.Κ. 874τ. Β'/17/9/96).
- 3) the initial establishment of Reception Classes for repatriated expatriates in 1980, followed in 1999 by Ministerial Decision (Φ / 10/20 / Γ1 / 708) regulating the way in which the following institutional scheme was established and operated:

Reception Class I.

Reception Class II

Tutorial Classes

Extended Hours

Also important for intercultural education is Law 2910/2001, which provides compulsory - and for children of foreigners - 9-year education and the possibility of enrolling them in public schools, even if they have incomplete supporting documents.

In an attempt to assess the legal framework for the education of children of immigrants and foreigners and refugees, we would first say that the positive thing is that the Greek state has practically acknowledged their right to education, but the efforts made do not go beyond its theoretical point of view-that is 'cultural deficit' of the assimilation or at best the integration model. Indeed, this Law shows its inconsistency with the European directives which provide that the Intercultural Education is defined on the basis of four elements:

- 1) most societies are multicultural with tendency to broaden this phenomenon
- 2) every culture has its own characteristics that must be recognized and respected
- 3) multiculturalism is a potential privilege,
- 4) in order to take advantage of the privilege of multiculturalism, the interaction between cultures must be ensured - without excluding any identity - and the transformation of the multicultural profile into intercultural.

Therefore, the Greek legislative framework, in theory, guarantees the right to public education for all children aged 6-15 irrespective of their nationality. It also provides structures and institutions (Intercultural Schools, Reception Classes, Tutorials) that provide support to foreign students by demonstrating the school's efforts to adapt to the principles of Intercultural Education. In practice, however, the criticism focuses on the lack of clarity in the formulation of the aims, principles and educational practices of intercultural education. This is a lack leading to a risk of misunderstandings or arbitrariness that may further lead to failure of measures or attempt to integrate immigrants with emphasis only on intensive teaching of the Greek language .

2.4. Intercultural Education and mother language.

Numerous studies since the beginning of the last century have dealt with the topic of bilingualism. Initially negative claims about the intellectual disadvantage of bilinguals have given rise to research findings that the development of the linguistic repertoire of individuals in two languages is a cognitive advantage. Since the 1950s, UNESCO has been referring to the positive impact of foreign students' native

language and culture on adapting to their new school environment . According to Cummins and the principle of language interdependence that has been formulated, there is a transfer of skills, concepts and knowledge from one language to another .

In 2005, the European Parliament announced that foreign pupils had the right to public education, where they would be taught both the language of their host country and that of their country of origin, so that their integration would not be remunerated. Even if they are children of second and third generation immigrants they should be allowed access to the language and culture of their country of origin. So the European Union formally adopts a new linguistic policy leading to linguistic diversity and bilingual education.

However, in Greece the majority, not to mention the whole, of the educational system offered these students reception classes, where after intensive courses in the official language, they are considered ready to join the regular classes. That is to say, it is mostly a monolingual policy where the mother tongue is replaced by the official language.

PART 2

Empirical Part

CHAPTER 3

3 . Aim of the Research.

The history of all migration flows, has shown that, although in principle adults migrate, mainly for work purposes and possibly for a short term stay in the host country, during their migratory life, they change their intention, and consequently some of them either extend their stay or even stay in the host country permanently. This change means the arrival of new members of the family in the host country. Also, migrants organize their lives in the host country, they get married and give birth to their children. Many of these children, as international experience has shown, will remain in the host country, even if their parents repatriate.

In modern Greece, now, exists a significant number of foreigners and consequently a large number of foreign students are following the Greek education curricula, particularly in schools of Athens and Thessaloniki. This new reality, poses the school in front of new challenges, that is, redefine its objectives and to address the issues have arisen. During the last years presence of foreign students in schools, they were recorded several problems concerning foreign students adaptation difficulties or problems are facing teachers and finally problems related with the relationship between foreign and native students.

A prerequisite for the integration of immigrant children is to address their problems, especially those associated with their education. Their possible exclusion from the educational process can lead in the general exclusion either from work or from society.

The question is whether and how the education system of Greece ensures or not equal opportunities for all, both in access as well as in the outcome of their studies at the various educational levels of the system. The reflection on the role of education, as teachers and children are experiencing regarding integration or vice versa the exclusion of migrant children, was the triggered point of making this research.

The school unit although it has the lowest position in the management of educational system, actually has a key position for the enforcement of objectives of education and in addition, it could be perceived as the inner space where issues related to migratory phenomenon produced or reproduced.

With this study my aim is to highlight the deficiencies and the failures, if any, of Greek education policies towards Interculturalism. Therefore, all the problems associated with the presence of foreigners in public schools through the views of teachers need to be illustrated and relevant solutions should be proposed. Highlighting the factors that facilitate integration of foreign or minority students, will lead to design an effective policy so that children can enjoy their right to education and will not be excluded by the school, consistently leading to professional and social exclusion. Clearly, the current reality in Greece, as is formulated by the presence of immigrants, shows that policy implementations in the future, will fail, unless presence of foreigners in schools is taken into account.

Although the limited sample the research does not allow generalization of results, I believe, that it will contribute to further knowledge on such an important and local issue such as the education of migrant children.

3.2. *Methodology and formulation of hypothesis.*

In order to achieve the objectives of the present study, the combination of more than one method was considered necessary. Mixed methods provide a more complete and comprehensive understanding of the research problem than either quantitative or qualitative approaches. However, interviews gave me the most valuable and detailed information about personal feelings, perceptions and opinions and allowed me to investigate my topic in depth. That is why I consider my research method more 'qualitative' than quantitative even if I used both methods.

More specifically, three studies were conducted, differentiating one another in terms of research method, level of education, stakeholders and location, in order to have more concrete results. Each of the study is presented on the following form: data, analysis and general conclusions as follows:

- 1) A quantitative study (research method), in Early Childhood Education (educational level), in the region of Thrace(location).
- 2) A qualitative study, with the use of questionnaire, in the Gypsy settlement of Thessaloniki.
- 3) A qualitative study, based on semi structured and open-ended questions interviews in the area of Thessaloniki.

I must clarify, that study number 1, was held based on quantitative data, due to long distance parameter (Western Thrace) and lack of funding. Thessaloniki is the city, where I live in, consequently it was easier for me to conduct interviews in this area with teachers from different schools. For this reason, I felt that I will have more immediate answers to my questions if I move in the school unit and aim at highlighting the views of teachers. More specifically, answers on how teachers see their role in the new reality, how they interpret the presence of immigrant children, how they face both the difficulties and the school progress of these students and also how they deal with their particular cultural features, shed light in the topic of my thesis. Additionally, perception of the subjects (foreign children) regarding their Education really matters, but it is of secondary importance as they are not able to express themselves(because of the young age or language issues) and consequently we can't have an in depth analysis of their answers.

The research hypothesis formulated for the research activity was that integration of foreign students in Greece will be more successful if the State implements educational policies relevant to the Intercultural model of Education.

CHAPTER 4

Empirical research on the case study: ‘‘Greek Education Policy towards Interculturalism’’.

Greek society has dealt with changing and growing diversity as a result of immigration, and political leadership of the country has been called to take action, plan and adapt adequate policies through which to accomplish these changes. One of the most sensitive and politically charged areas of public policy is perhaps the education sector because of its effective role in identity formation, national cohesion and national consciousness. It is correspondingly one of the most essential sectors in socio-economic terms, as it offers access to the job market, personal and economic development. In relation to this context, answers should be given to core questions in order to have a clear and complete image of Greek Education policy towards Interculturalism. The questions, which I investigate in the thesis are: how has intercultural education policy been implemented in Greece in response to growing immigration? How is it understood to associate with the Greek identity? What are the major aims of Greek educational policy concerning contemporary Greek society on the whole? Are there any changes, and if so in what way? Are there differences towards experiences on the part of the various stakeholders?

Finding answers to all the above questions will offer me a concrete answer to my research question, i.e. ‘To what extend is Interculturalism implemented successfully through the Greek Educational system?’.

4. Early Childhood Teachers' Views and their problems in Greece.

Surprisingly little is known in the Greek context about early childhood educator's attitudes and beliefs upon the implementation of Intercultural education. The study is part of a research conducted by two undergraduate students, Μαρίνα Καραγιάννη and Σοφία Πετράκη, in the Department of Education Sciences in Pre-School Age of Democritus University of Thrace. Early childhood educators were recruited only from the region of Thrace in Northern Greece (urban and rural areas), where the Muslim minority is settled. Although the methodology of the research was quantitative, all the research results were really valuable for the empirical part of my thesis as they shed light to my research question. Thanks to this data I included scopes by stakeholders in the region of Thrace, where I had no access due to distance and cost parameters⁷³.

A Questionnaire was distributed to 63 professionals, which varied in early childhood settings, in two districts of Northern Greece, which have a large proportion of minorities. The Questionnaire approached early childhood teachers and educators in selective state kindergartens and the local communities' early childhood centers. The above personnel were invited to participate in the study by means of a letter. The letter was distributed two months before the end of the school year (2017) at each preschool establishment. Early childhood educators were asked to answer the questionnaire anonymously and to return it to the researchers within a week.

A pre-piloted questionnaire was completed by students of the 8th semester of the Department of early childhood care and education of the Technological Educational Institute of Thessaloniki⁷⁴. After minor modifications, the questionnaire was administered to a sample of sixty-three kindergartens of the Department of Education and Early Childhood centers of Local Communities' Services. The questionnaire consisted of a series of statements that described the dimensions of early childhood education and had been selected for their application and their relevance to the area of research. The questionnaire was made up of closed questions and the data had been

⁷³ See ANNEX number 1.

⁷⁴ The Technological Educational Institute of Thessaloniki gave me all the information and data of the research. It was part of the internship made by a female student held from September 2017 for six months.

analyzed through a procedure using a statistical package related to social science (SPSS).

Descriptive statistics were used in the statistical analysis. Correlation analysis between the early childhood teachers' views and their ranking of importance of factors related with their work effectiveness also provided associations between teachers views and teaching practice. The significant levels used in the study were 1% and 5%. Concerning the composition of the students only 16,7% were native children.

Results

The Profile of Early Childhood Educators

The participants were working 81, 1% in urban areas and 18,9% in rural areas either at Kindergartens (62,3%) or at Early childhood Centers (37,7%). The profile of the teachers who were interested enough to participate in the research was consisted mainly of women (98,4% women and 1,6% men) and the majority were married (82.3%) and 79,7% of them had their own children.

Almost half of them had a great deal of teaching experience: 47,5% had twenty or more years within the early childhood education field. Among the participants 43 held the minimum qualification of a Diploma of Kindergarten teacher, 14 held the diploma of Educare (vrefonipiokomos) and six were recruited from other scientific fields. The findings show that none had attended postgraduate studies and only 11,1% of them had participated in intercultural education seminars.

Important issues of Intercultural education related to teaching practice.

First of all, 93,4% recognized how important it is for them to develop the concept of Interculturalism. This finding supports the idea that there is a sound basis for further development of Interculturalism. In this context professionals usually apply several approaches to integrate this intercultural perspective either by curricula activities (84,1%), parental meetings (46%) or multicultural literature (23,8%).

The respondents were asked to rank the most important goal for their work. According to the results, children's preparation for effective integration in the educational system seems to be of major concern to early childhood educators

(44,4%) while what seems less important are the issues of children's' preparation to meet the social and cultural demand of Greece (20.7%), reconciliation between children's' cultural identity and the Greek culture (20,7%) and recognition of cultural diversity highlighting similarities and differences between cultures(17,2%).

Professionals were asked to evaluate whether their teaching approach to children from diverse cultures is effective and is it fulfills the parental expectations for the children. The finding showed that 84,3% of the respondents is quite satisfied and 57,7% of them believe that preschool services meet parental expectations. In order to identify which aspects relate to their satisfaction, the correlation between the above responses and early childhood educators' profile was analyzed. Surprisingly, the findings revealed that professionals who had their own children were more likely to be satisfied regarding the work with children from diverse cultures, while as all others, who were not parents, were feeling less effective.($p=0,033<0,05$).

Early Childhood Educator's Problems and Needs.

Regarding the various problems early childhood teachers experience with children from minorities groups children it was evident that many difficulties in the teaching process are related mostly with the language of teaching instruction(91,2%) and the issues of children's' bilingualism(86,4%), absence of parental help (71,4%) and less with their social/interpersonal relations with other peers(51%). Finally, 18,2% stated that they didn't have any problems with the language.

Further investigation revealed that the above problems are attributed to a complex configuration of causes such as:

- a) The National Educational system (27%).
- b) Adequate parental knowledge of the Greek language (22,7%).
- c) Adequate communication skills between teachers and children (20,5%).
- d) Adequate teacher preparation system (11,4%).

Despite the findings that the issue of language appears to be an important factor in the teaching process the study revealed that professionals while they are mostly negative regarding the provision of a new model of bilingual early childhood education (51,7%) on the contrary 64,5% of them were willing to learn one native

language of their students. According to the findings it seems that early childhood educators pay much attention to in-service education since 91,7% of the respondents emphasize the necessity of seminars in Intercultural education.

The findings of the study also indicated that early childhood educators are not familiar with issues related to the cultural and social context of minority groups. In fact, only 5,1% of them were well aware of the educational issues, 10,2% with cultural issues and 13,8% with the economic context. In order to identify whether this kind of knowledge influences teaching practice, the correlation between the above responses and type of teaching approaches early childhood educators use was analysed. Professionals' knowledge concerning the economy and the cultural context of the children's' origin country is strongly correlated with the teaching practice ($p=0,022<0,05$ and $p=0,023<0,05$).

Finally an important issue in working with children from diverse cultural backgrounds is the establishment of "authentic" communication not only with children but with their parents as well. Early childhood educators were asked to evaluate their relationships with children and parents from diverse backgrounds. The educators' responses were varied: 33,9% had very good relationships, 57,6% just good and 8,5% adequate enough. The correlations between the above responses and professional's answers related to the difficulties they face in the teaching process were analyzed and it was found that the majority of educators who attributed many of their problems to the absence of parental help had bad relationships with parents ($p=0,039<0,05$). The findings indicated that communication and collaboration between professionals and parents is a crucial component for effective practice.

Analysis

The study investigated early childhood educators' views about Intercultural education by identifying their beliefs, values, needs and problems regarding several aspects of their teaching approaches. In light of the increasing demographic changes regarding the composition of preschool children in the context of early childhood settings, the findings are of great relevance concerning current debates about the development of intercultural education.

Central to the study was the view that teaching with an intercultural perspective in early childhood requires from the educator an awareness on his own beliefs and a view of the world, knowledge of the socio-cultural contexts of children's' diverse backgrounds and the communication skills between these children and their parents in order to develop flexible teaching strategies. By identifying early childhood teachers' views relevant to the above aspects, explanations can be sought for inconsistencies between the rhetoric of theory and teaching practice and a deeper understanding of their problems and needs may eventually benefit future developments in intercultural education.

Current debates about the goals in early childhood education in Greece stress the importance of intercultural education. But how do professionals perceive this concept and in what ways does it motivate their teaching practice within the early childhood settings? On the basis of these topics I will try to demonstrate and analyze their views.

The social context of Early Childhood Settings

First of all, it became apparent that the majority of the respondents were not trained at all to work with a diverse student population. Thus our findings revealed a great demand for in-service intercultural education. On the other side the diverse composition of the student population in early childhood settings suggests that refocused attention is needed for new dimensions in teachers' role. The findings about professionals' ignorance on the country of origin of diverse children in their setting revealed not only the way they perceive the concept of Interculturalism but also-in my view- their lost opportunities to broaden their world-view into their teaching approaches.

Important issues of Intercultural Education related to teaching practice.

The central idea was that the professionals' attitudes towards the goals for early childhood education would depend upon prioritized values, which may influence their teaching approaches and practices. Although from the results the need for training in intercultural competence across early childhood educators was clearly apparent, there is evidence that professionals have accepted the concept of Multiculturalism as a reality. This finding supports the idea that while on the one hand there is a sound basis for further development of Interculturalism on the other hand it seems that

professionals are being challenged by the need to consider the impact of multicultural issues in the context of pre-school setting.

However, it became clear that the respondents are not aware of current debates and research evidence relevant to intercultural education and it seems that the majority of them, receiving a minimum support from the state, work on their own. This view provides explanation why:

- They value the issues of ‘‘children’s’ integration’’ as the most important educational goal in the educational system than that of ‘‘recognition of cultural diversity’’
- They were negative in the introduction of early childhood bilingual education in spite of recognizing language communicative problems.
- Parenthood probably acts as a motive for professionals to address some of the needs for culturally diverse student.

Early Childhood Educator’s problems and needs.

Two issues emerged from the data, of significance importance for the teaching practice in the field of early childhood. First is the concept of communication and collaboration between educators and parents of children from diverse cultures. The research gives clear evidence that ‘‘authentic relationships’’ and communication with parents constitutes a critical element for intercultural understanding and the development of effective teaching. Other researchers have stressed the need for communication with parents within an increasingly diverse community environment⁷⁵.

Secondly, is the issue of the professionals’ broad knowledge of the children’s’ cultural background, which can support the efficacy of adjusting teaching approaches. It is crucial for the teacher to develop the ability to conceptualize and integrate culture and issues of diversity within the developmental perspective and for the child these issues to be integrated in the offered curriculum and teaching practice. Research evidence suggests that teachers who are informed about children’s’ cultural

⁷⁵ Govaris C. , “Collaboration between Educators and Parents of immigrant children in the context of multicultural kindergarten.”, Athens: In Journal “Contemporary Kindergarten”, 2002, pp. 18-23.

backgrounds may apply this to their own teaching practices supporting better children's' motivation and learning.

These issues are interrelated with effective teaching in a multicultural society because at the microsystem enhance teachers' awareness and knowledge promoting intercultural perspective in curriculum and teaching approaches while it is expected that at the macro-system should function not only as an early childhood setting – home-community liaison but also to have a powerful impact in promoting a broader understanding among different groups and guiding sound education policy. In my view professionals' adequate awareness, knowledge and communication skills are the main sources of problems when they are trying to incorporate intercultural issues into their teaching practice.

General conclusions

The evidence of this study highlights the enormous task early childhood educators face in their teaching practice because they need to understand and appreciate cultural identities of young children and to serve as effective teachers for all. Research evidence suggests that the introduction of intercultural education is not only a matter of curriculum innovation but also requires the proper social context and professionals' personal reconsiderations of positive feelings and points of views⁷⁶.

The findings reflect the underlying values and beliefs of early childhood professionals and provide an understanding for their needs if they have to teach with intercultural perspectives. The result of our study leads us to the following conclusion:

1. Teaching with an intercultural perspective requires 'reflective teachers'. Adequate awareness, knowledge and communication skills are important components with which professionals should be armed, either through pre-service or in-service education, if it is to provide the best comprehensive educational services to the increasingly diverse student population,
2. Early childhood educators' views towards the intercultural perspectives in teaching are related directly to their beliefs, values and experiences rather than

⁷⁶ Damanakis A., "Multicultural-Intercultural Education: Start, goals and perspectives", Athens: In Journal "ekpedeftika", 2004, pp. 18-35.

to available current debates and research evidence about the issue. Thus, there is an urgent need for professionals to be informed and educated through relevant in-service education.

3. The training of culturally sensitive professionals seems to be a very important starting point from now on. Acceptance of that view presupposes that Educational Institutions should be adapted on the basis of an Intercultural philosophy and teacher-training programs should reflect what the teachers would face.
4. Teaching with an intercultural perspective also requires educational recourses and support at the level of provision of relevant intercultural curriculum, teaching intervention strategies and assessment.

Of particular significance, the research revealed that teaching with an intercultural perspective in early childhood on the basis of developmental appropriateness is not simple and needs the understanding of the myriad of issues that bear on not only in theory but also on how these issues can be adopted into daily teaching practice. Certainly, this requires time, a change of attitude and new approaches for early childhood at educational Institutions and policy level. These particular aspects indicate that the issue of Interculturalism needs more attention and the enrichment of findings from future research.

4.2. Gypsy Children: an examination of their integration through the Greek educational system.

The purpose of this study is aimed in determining the mechanisms of social representations that are involved in relation to the education of school-age Gypsy children. The question that is being posed here is that, to what extent the difficulty that the Gypsy children have in learning is purely a matter of familial beliefs about education and insecurities about their cultural identity or perhaps a matter of educational systems' incapability with regards to the command of the Greek language. In other words, since integration is a two-way process, the successfulness of Intercultural policy implementations is interdependent on both sides, i.e. on the

effectiveness of Greek educational system ('transmitter') and on the willingness of the Gypsy children to integrate themselves ('receiver').

In order to achieve the objective of the present study a questionnaire was formed⁷⁷, which is divided into five thematic entities, namely: socio-demographic characteristics, education, work, residence, personal relationships. It includes open-ended and specific questions. The questionnaire was administered to Gypsy children from the ages 9 to 13. Of course, before this questionnaire was utilized in this study, it was applied experimentally to a Gypsy child – with similar characteristics to the group under study – who worked in an open market.

The study was carried out during the period before the Christmas holiday of the academic year 2017-2018 at the school for Gypsies which is located in a remote area of Thessaloniki. The particular school functions within the context of a European program although the Municipality supports it financially. This school is now functioning on an investigatory level and its success will provide the grounds for the creation of further more schools. The building is in bad condition and there is an absence of heating and teaching aids.

My first visit was aimed in getting acquainted with teachers and pupils. The atmosphere was favorable due to the willingness and cooperation on behalf of the teachers, two of whom had previous experience in similar kinds of schools. The contact with the children was direct and warm. The children were polite, cheerful and willing to participate in the "game" that had been proposed. At first, the children were required to sketch their views of school. The responses were high since drawing was their favorite activity.

In the next meeting, the questionnaire was given to them and they answered willingly. Considering that the questionnaire had a personal format, expectations for great interest and expression were fulfilled. The children tended to quarrel over who would answer first.

Data results.

The socio-demographic characteristics of the subjects.

⁷⁷ See ANNEX number 2.

In total, the gypsy children were 30: 28 boys and 2 girls, but only 21 of them had completed the questionnaire and 29 children had completed the drawing. Their ages ranged from 8 to 13 years old, with the average being 10 years of age. The subjects were Greek citizens of Orthodox Christian religion, pupils in the 1st and 2nd grade of elementary school. The children were raised in the Thessaloniki Gypsy settlement. They belonged to multi-membered families who had both parents.

Education.

The children of this study show a positive attitude toward school and teachers. In addition, a noteworthy fact is that parents of the subjects do not discourage their children from education, despite the fact that they themselves are illiterate. In spite of all this, most of the children present in this study face difficulties in reading and writing, a fact which is attributed by the children themselves to the difficulty of the Greek language, which, as most of them mention, contains many difficult letters. This occurs because the majority of the Gypsies do not use Greek at home in a daily basis. Although they know Greek among themselves and with parents, siblings and other relatives communication is mainly in the Gypsy language, "their own language", as they say.

Work.

In the third thematic unit 21 subjects answered that they work with their father, following him in his profession, indeed, participating actively in covering their family's survival needs, since almost 50% of the responses showed that they give the money that they earn to their parents. In addition, the children think that money will form "the counterweight to their marginalization and their blunted differentiation" in relation to the "Others".

Residence.

In the fourth unit, the images given are the same for all the Gypsy children. All 21 live in the Thessaloniki settlement, in one room shacks, with electricity from a generator, without plumbing, telephone, or a library. At home they do not read books, newspapers or magazines. All the children express the desire to acquire a house like

those of the Greeks, ‘‘built, with bricks, nice-looking, where rain doesn’t fall in’’, as they characteristically say.

Interpersonal relationships.

Finally, questioned matters relating to the Gypsy children’s relationships with other age mates, similar and different, questions about identity, culture and the profession which they could like to follow in the future, was very interesting. From the answers it becomes clear that the Gypsy children who filled out the questionnaire have very good relations with the other Gypsy children: they ‘‘play together’’, ‘‘walk around’’, ‘‘bicycle’’ and show a preference for group games. In contrast, they have no relationship with the Greek children because they bother them, scold them and swear at them.

A very important information which results from the answers that the children gave regarding what they wanted to become when they grew up deserves mentioning. The majority of the boys answered that they wanted to become policemen or lawyers, that is, professions which have a direct relation to power and the law of the State. This results from the fact that these children experience the concept of strength and power, which is found both in the law, and in punishment, since they or their families are often accused of participating in thefts or other illicit activities. In this way, their specific social representation of their Self in relation to professions has been formed. This desire contrasts with their parents’ desire for them to follow their father’s profession. However, they consider that a change of profession will erase their differentiation from the Others: in other words, they will feel that they are not different, that is, they consider that upward economic and social movement will assimilate them to the Others, the ‘‘Greeks’’.

General Conclusions.

The Gypsy children which I met at the school for Gypsy children in Thessaloniki belong to the tribe of the Romany Gypsies, a tribe which tends to promote their children’s education. The category of education for this group of children, is located between two others sub-categories, which are related to family and language. The

Gypsy language is a basic point of reference regarding cultural identities of a population group as well as contrasting this group with the Greek children: ‘‘ I am the reading one’’ is a syntactically wrong phrase but indicates the spontaneity that emerge from her own culture into the Greek culture.

Gypsy children, on the one hand, feel positive about themselves (‘‘we are free’’, ‘‘we are strong’’, ‘‘we have our own language’’, etc..) and, on the other hand, they love and protect their manners and customs, and their cultural identity (‘‘we don’t speak Greek at home’’, ‘‘we don’t play with Greek people’’, ‘‘we don’t have relations with Greek children’’, ‘‘we are working with our family’’). That way, many times, communication with the ‘‘others’’ tends to vanish, and marginalization of this group settles in i.e.: the denial of accession into the greek educational system, social distance or putting themselves on the fringes of the wide social environment. Finally, that system of social values tends to guide the behavior of the Gypsy children towards the out-group either in an aggressive form of behavior against the majority or in the form of obedience and compliance to the group of social influence.

All the above, shows that the Greek Education Policy implementations towards this ethnic group (Gypsies) are insufficient. There are at least two reasons for this: poor knowledge of the official language which they are taught in and desire for conservation of their cultural identity as well as for their own type of education, which often breaks the link between their community and the school. This study result confirms that integration is a two way process. Furthermore Interculturalism seems to be the best model for Gypsies’ integration as Intercultural language strategies (teaching the official language as a second foreign language) have been proved successful. Concerning Greek Education Policy for the education of Gypsies, I can observe the following weakness: absence of nursery school. Children should be covered by the educational institutions even in pre-school age. This will help them learn the official language of the country to enrich their cognitive experience and to prepare for school.

4.3. Teachers evaluate problems associated with the presence of foreigners in public schools.

The limited number of interviews I conducted greatly determined the sample of teachers' approach I included in my research. My main aim was to have interviews from people, who were as different as possible, in order to avoid those who have similar views and experiences. Having this in my mind, to expand my sample, I used the "snowball" method, and I have visited various schools without arranging any meeting with teachers. I tried, in particular, to reach teachers who teach in schools located in various parts of Thessaloniki, believing that this choice of places will reveal problems associated with the local community. Additionally, with the permission of the headmasters of the school, I remained in the courtyard and in the halls, in order to watch the children's reactions and in particular behaviors among migrant children and indigenous children, with the purpose of understanding and interpreting better the information I gathered from teachers.

Since my main goal was to emphasize in the qualitative features that would be revealed after my contact with teachers, my interviews with teachers (and where it was possible with stakeholders relevant to education) have been made with semi-structured questions (interview guide). I chose this form of interviews so as to allow teachers themselves to mark, to indicate and to illuminate any aspects of Intercultural education, which could not be included in a closed questionnaire and thus would be excluded. The reward of this option came by teachers, who, in our first contact for the interview, refused to answer a questionnaire with closed questions-answers, highlighting as key arguments that one-word answers would not enable them to express themselves freely and to analyze their positions and their experiences and also that, because the questionnaire is designed by people who are not familiar with the issues, questions usually do not focus on the issues which would be more important to deal with, thus often lead to false conclusions.

I addressed to teachers of public Primary, Secondary and High schools including Intercultural schools, too. Due to the lack of time and funding, I had to choose the education level in which I would focus more. After the first meetings I had with

teachers, I concluded that a large amount of foreign students attend secondary school thus several problems have been observed and therefore I focused my attention on it. I also emphasized in the Primary school since an equally large amount of children is enrolled and because of the assessment that these students are now the second-generation children of immigrants. Furthermore, primary education is of great importance for the progress of the children. As a result, I preferred to allocate my time respectively.

Questions were structured in modules, according to the areas I wanted to explore:

- General assessment of the present and future situation in education.
- Framework and policy applications in schools.
- Characteristics of the student population.
- Effects of exogenous factors in the educational process.

Since my research was conducted in the area of Thessaloniki and was held a small sample, we cannot consider the results representative neither of the research population nor of the whole country. However, these results are important indicators for a future nationwide research. The education of migrants concerns both Greeks and immigrants it is associated with the present and the future of Greek society.

Data Analysis.

The following analysis is a horizontal approach of our data for each section separately⁷⁸. The questionnaire is ranked on key topics - modules and sub-topics in a way that I can extract and analyze all the information. In my analysis, the modules constitute the fixed frame of reference when trying to distinguish potential differences between the different levels of education.

The limited survey sample does not allow us to refer to opinions with percentage terms. But, I will refer to the prevailing view expressed by most and the possible opposing views, if they represent any teachers. Based on research ethics, I will not mention the names of teachers, nor the schools in which they teach, so as to ensure the

⁷⁸ See ANNEX number 3.

anonymity of respondents. The fact that it is important is to properly reflect the experiences and practices and to highlight the issues that have arisen in the new school reality outside and beyond the specific persons.

1) Primary School⁷⁹.

The teachers evaluate as an important aspect of the immigration phenomenon the social implications of the foreign students' presence not only in the educational system but in the host society generally. Many teachers highlight the raise of the racism incidents in the Greek society, a fact that the Greek state was not ready to face. The teachers think that the state should set as its first priority the social embodiment of the immigrants, believing that they will have to play a significant role in this direction.

It is estimated that the foreign students will become more as the time passes by but this is not perceived as a potential problem because most of the children are already born in Greece. However, there are still concerns expressed by some teachers regarding this progress either because they think that the Greek society will be influenced and racist behaviors will occur or because they fear that those children will face social exclusion and isolation caused by both the host society and the very culture of the children. There is also the fear of the unexpected enormous raise of the outlanders that may influence the Greek society in the future as it faces problems of birth deficit. This looming development may result to a supremacy of the foreign students in numbers and the creation of ghetto schools, a fact that according to almost all the teachers sets in danger the future of their profession.

We can say that the teachers have a clear position on the matter of what the state should not do. They are against the creation of different and exclusive schools for the foreign students for the reasons mentioned above, they are also against the quota application in the school system as it is perceived as an anti-educational measure that will lead to the marginalization of those children and it is practically impossible to be applied. Moreover, they connect the school reality with the general conditions of the Greek society, in the sense that there should be measures taken for the immigrants' social embodiment in general. One specific measure that should be taken immediately

⁷⁹ Ibid.

is the application of co-teaching in the same classrooms so the educational voids that the foreign students may have will be covered, the indigenous students will not be unfairly treated and there will exist far less possibilities of recriminations among the students.

There are many differences regarding the teachers' views on the institutional framework. According to one view, the framework is considered sufficient with flexibility but this can have both positive and negative outcomes. On another view, it is thought as insufficient mostly in regards to the way it works and how it is applied. Each and every school is taking advantage of this flexibility and uncertainties of the framework and it is applied on will. This phenomenon of course leads to positive results when there is a core of teachers who care for the progress of the foreign students and the school's cohesion and to negative results when this core does not exist. Furthermore, as long as the framework's implication is depended on the school's management, a change in the school's management may lead to a change of the framework and, in turn, to inconsistency and discontinuities on the program's implication. On the proposals formulated by the teachers there is great emphasis on the reception courses that , according to these proposals, should have a great consistency and be made by the most capable teachers, even during the summer period or the weekends. There is also great emphasis given to the connection of the school with the local communities.

The teachers are self-defined as the ones who are willing to work on the new educational environment having only as their supply their own will and sensitivity to continue their work even against every possible negative element that may exist in the educational sector. However almost every teacher declares unprepared for the emerging new situation and they ask from the state for support in personnel and in kind. For now, the whole situation is saved by the teachers' own actions and initiatives concerning the educational and the social embodiment of the foreign children. Although they face all odds and difficulties caused by the broader environment (parents, society etc.) they try their best to stop any possible cultivation of racist behaviors. Many of them are lenient towards the foreign children's performance in school but this tactic is viewed by other teachers as flawed, mostly because it just reposes the problem in the near future and sometimes it may seem as unfair to the rest of the children.

Several teachers felt the necessity to restructure the curriculum in order to include the dimension of Interculturalism in it, while others, mention alternative instructional means, although very useful, don't have wide application because of the ignorance or the indifference on the part of the teachers.

Furthermore, the teachers believe that the progress and development of foreign children is directly related to the economic and cultural-educational level of their parents, to the duration of their stay in the country and at some extent to their ethnicity, but not to their gender. Many children work to help their parents, as a result they are not consistent in their school obligations. The high educational level of the parents positively affects their own children; the same applies to their long stay in the country, a fact that entails a good knowledge of the language and to some extent a possible good integration into the Greek society.

However the immigrant parents do not have the time, the knowledge of the Greek language and the Greek educational system, to help their children in their learning difficulties. The views of most of the teachers converge on the observation that these children have a special inclination and performance in class of mathematics (which bypasses the obstacle of a good knowledge of the Greek language), and that there are higher possibilities for example for the Albanian children to be better integrated.

The relationship among the children (native-foreign) is generally good because the younger the children, the less racist behaviors are observed. In cases that such behaviors are observed it is mainly due to the family environment. There is a balance maintained within the school environment, however, it is fragile and in any occasion it can be reversed. For example, the social stigma of a thief parent which victimizes persons of a particular nationality, and it follows their children to the school environment, so the children are either closed on themselves or they become aggressive, suspicious or touchy. The safest way for a foreign student to be accepted in the classroom, is to perform well in lessons. However, any good relationship between the child (foreign-indigenous) held in school, are usually not held outside the school. The teachers estimate that most students will evolve by connecting their positive path to integration and their high degree of assimilation. The main factor of this self-evolution is not the state's initiatives but cultural readiness of the foreign children and in extense their parents.

The Greek parents intervene often enough in the school issues and in some cases on issues concerning foreign students, unlike their foreign parents, who do not intervene, because they believe that they should not, or they do not have time as long they work, or they are self-deferring because of insufficient knowledge of the Greek language. On the contrary, the local authorities or the supervisory authorities and unions rarely interfere in the work of teachers.

2) Secondary School⁸⁰.

The secondary school teachers face the requirements of the state, on the one hand and the reality within the class on the other. That is, they should choose either to meet the specific requirements of the Ministry to complete the curriculum not caring for an equal understanding among the students or to help foreign students and delay the whole class. In this case, however, it is unfair for the indigenous pupils and causes friction in the classroom. The problem occurs when the children enter the Gymnasium by one notch (Elementary), where the requirements are not high and with possible accumulative gaps in the children's knowledge. Therefore, the teachers point out the necessity of meeting the children's deficiencies that may be created during their years in primary school, so that they can cope with the demands of the secondary school. Their dilemma kept coming back throughout the interview and while they expressed concern about their image and a fear of being considered racists.

Most of the secondary school teachers consider that the foreign children in schools are many, a reality which for many of them is linked to a problematic situation. The "problem" as an expression, is mentioned quite often in the opinions of secondary school teachers and is located either in the very existence of many foreign students as an unpleasant situation or at the state level as the state does not provide for their integration into the educational system. They estimate that the number of foreign students will increase in the future in absolute numbers and percentages due to the low birth rate of the Greek population. This development is linked to the maintenance of schools and their change, therefore, the presence of foreigners ensures on the one hand that the teachers will keep their jobs but on the other hand it makes it harder.

⁸⁰ See ANNEX number 3.

Some teachers believe that the increase of foreign students could have positive results for the country, but on the condition that measures will be taken by the state for their integration. Others express their dissatisfaction about the impending overthrow of the balance among the Greeks and the foreigners as well as their anxiety about national identity.

Concerning the policy that should be followed by the state to address the issue of the education of the foreign children, some teachers express views, which in essence are conflicting with each other, while expressing their concern about the difficult situation they are experiencing. Yes and no to the quota, the same for the individual schools, which on the one hand it would be a solution, on the other hand, both measures are anti-educational and hardly effective. The most concrete measure proposed is the implementation of the programs for teaching the Greek language to foreigners. Also, a good knowledge of the language needs to be set as a basic condition for their integration into the educational system. Some suggest that the teaching must be done during the attendance at the primary school, so that students are sufficiently equipped and can meet the requirements of the courses taught in secondary school. In addition, highlighted is the need for an educational reform. Some teachers refer to the phenomenon of immigration in general and propose measures to control and limit it.

There are two aspects in regards to the institutional framework with the prevailing view being that it is relatively satisfactory but with implementation problems, but by some, is considered inadequate. The critic of most of the teachers is channeled to the state for the indifference on the issues related to the education of immigrant children, but from different perspectives, with a focus either on Greek society or the children themselves. In the first one, it is expressed the anguish of teachers to assimilate these children and is expressed in the request for special programs which will include teaching of the Greek language and elements of Greek culture, so the children achieve their assimilation. The second perspective is dominating the debate about the implications of the shortcomings of the educational system on the children themselves. By these teachers recommendations are made that are related to the operation of the reception classes that will not be integrated into the curriculum and that may cause problems in the general way that the school works.

The problems and needs of a multicultural class are numerous despite the many superhuman efforts made by the teachers who are alone and without supplies, so they propose the organization of training courses conducted by qualified instructors. In the daily practice, the teachers try to meet the state's gaps by applying practices by themselves in order to discover them, to fill the learning gaps of foreign children, to deal with behavioral issues and to resolve any conflicts arising between children. Furthermore, the necessity of hiring psychologists and social workers in schools is stressed.

About the means at their disposal, teachers refer mainly to infrastructure and pay special attention to the functioning of small parts, especially small schools. Also highlighted is the need to modernize the curriculum in general, and especially for the children of foreigners, proposing a special curriculum for these children that will be taught outside normal hours, so as to become participants of the Greek culture.

Very few teachers reported some measures taken in the school to make it easier to address the issues related to foreigners. Most reported on difficulties in class and especially in teaching certain subjects that are not easy to understand from the foreign students because of the cultural differences between the society of origin and the Greek one. The situation becomes much worse if there are many children attending school.

Teachers expressed themselves negatively on the behavior of foreign children, while, their reports of their progress are positive. In general, it is estimated that the Albanians (who are the majority) have no good behavior, but will thrive. Many are the teachers who believe that foreign children will thrive and be integrated, especially the Albanians, while some others will have a predictable course and a within frames progress. Their development is not related to gender, but positively affected by their long stay in Greece and their studies in Greek Primary School.

The image that the teachers have regarding the relations among the children of different nationality is of a superficial steadiness and convergence, given that easily and in any occasion, racist tendencies can emerge leading to conflicts. Also, even in the case of good relationships among children of different nationalities, they are mostly limited to school, in a few cases maintained and last out of it and in any case, a

foreign student who performs well in courses is accepted by the other children in the class.

The delay in completing the compulsory curriculum leaves exposed the professor towards the Ministry of Education, but can also create the conditions for intervention by the Greek parents against the teachers, mainly about the delay and less for the presence of foreign students. But the teachers themselves believe that if foreigners would be more, there would be resistance from their parents' side. Instead, the parents of foreign students do not interfere in the work of teachers in matters related to the school in any way and for any reason.

3) High School⁸¹.

The overall picture given by the high school teachers for the situation in schools is relatively good, since, as they themselves said, foreign children who have reached high school, are already familiar with the Greek educational system. They believe that foreign children are many, but not to the point that their presence is a problem. Their numbers in schools, over time will increase, particularly in percentage due to the low birth rate of the Greek population. They note that, already, schools with large numbers of foreigners are created, because the Greeks parents choose private schools for their children and that the phenomenon will gradually get larger dimensions. The result of these practices is linked to the jobs of teachers in the public high schools with the presence of foreigners in them.

They stress that there should be taken policy measures by the state to address the issues associated with the presence of foreigners in schools, but in any case, the state should not institute separate schools, nor to follow the quota system. Instead, it is proposed to apply remedial teaching to foreign students that will help them in learning the Greek language and basic elements of Greek culture, which should take place within the school after the teaching hours. Another aspect is that the municipalities should take initiative and organize such courses for children of all schools in the region.

Teachers of Lyceum (High school) note that while schools are staffed with competent teachers, there is a lack in the state's support. The training of teachers is

⁸¹ See ANNEX number 3.

projected as a priority of major importance for the treatment of not only foreign but generally the children's problems, as well as the presence of psychologists for the children's support.

Teachers refer to infrastructure, low quality of schools but they mostly refer to the necessity of restructuring of the curriculum in general and for all children. As part of this restructuring and in the light of this new educational reality, there could be generally introduced courses on racism, human rights, etc.

The institutional framework is deemed satisfactory, and is emphasized again the necessity of a consistent teaching of foreign students the Greek language and culture, especially in the early grades of school. In high school there is no particular policy applied to immigrants and as shown is not required, because children who have reached the high school have by far surpassed the difficulties and the leak has occurred between compulsory and optional step. Despite this, the teachers make a request for a continuous education of foreign children in the language and in general the elements of Greek culture. The same, in any event that may require these children to be helped, they are self-reactive and willing to assist them in language needs or to take initiatives to promote the inclusion of children in the class and their acceptance by the other students.

A factor that may affect the progress of children is the low economic and educational level of their parents, with any exceptions. Conversely, the longer they stay in Greece and taking part in the Greek education system at an early age can positively influence their development. There are no differences in children depending on their gender.

About the relationship between children with different nationality, teachers believe that it is good in general, but, in these cases, the good relations are in a very small extent kept out of school because it involves the role of Greek parents and their decisive and negative influence.

Although these children may already be attending high school, teachers do not seem very optimistic about their progress and estimate that very few will manage to do something important in their lives. Teachers accept interventions by Greek parents,

concerning all school issues, even for those on foreigners, while the foreign parents do not participate in school events.

Constitution of the teachers' views (Similarities and Differences)

A. Section: Assessment of the situation in education

In this section I wanted to capture the assessment and how teachers interpret Interculturalism in the school institution. The general assessment of teachers, at all levels, is that there are many immigrant children attending schools and that in the future this number, but mainly their percentage participation in the total student population will grow due to the low birth rate of the Greek population. The result of this data is to connect and to secure their jobs by the presence of foreign students.

However, the estimation for the high degree of participation of foreigners in the total student population, is perceived differently by the teachers, depending on the educational level at which they teach and in any case, depending on the problems they face. Teachers in Primary schools, give weight to the impact of migration on the host society. In particular, they are worried about the rise of racism in the Greek population and for the exclusion and marginalization of children from the Greek society. Teachers of high school face the presence of foreigners in schools as a natural evolution, noting that gradually schools will be divided into those in which only foreigners attending or only Greeks.

The secondary school teachers refer to the foreign students presence as a "problem" noting that foreign students arrive at this stage with many shortcomings (Elementary teachers are flexible, so the children have problems in attendance). However, secondary school teachers too, as well as those of the other educational stages, believe that state intervention for the integration of students into the education system is necessary. In some cases, it is expressed their concern for the future of Greece (low birth rate, resulting in the change of foreign / native balance), but the care for the integration of foreigners is thought as one-way option.

The secondary school teachers are those who bear the greatest burden of teaching, because of the deficiencies that children have while they are bound by the instructions

of the Ministry to cover the curriculum in children of different capability levels. Between secondary school and high school there is usually a flow of foreign students. Students, who have progressed to high school, are the ones who have overcome obstacles, know the language and are generally more integrated into the education system.

Almost all teachers support the non-attendance of foreign students in schools separately from their native ones, also the non-appliance of any kind of quota in schools, considering them both as anti-educational measures, impractical and dangerous that just favor the marginalization of foreigners. However, some (few) teachers of secondary schools seem skeptical on this perspective, while proposing the teaching of Greek language while attending the primary school, a position supported by the teachers of high school too, adding that there is a need for teaching courses that will help foreigners to become participants of the Greek culture. Most teachers suggest the co-teaching in classrooms, as an effective measure to enhance children who have problems and avoid discriminations between the school and the indigenous students' parents, also they emphasize on the necessity of taking measures for the integration of immigrants.

B. Section: Assessment of policies on education

In Greece, in the 80s it was recognized the need to address the problems associated with insufficient knowledge of the language of the repatriated students and addressed by adopting an intensive teaching in Reception Classes and Tutorial Departments. Then, these applications were applied to foreign students as well. In this section, teachers were asked to evaluate these measures, the means that they themselves have to address the, related with the education of allophone children, issues and to submit their proposals concerning the above.

Most teachers consider that the institutional framework governing the education of foreigners is satisfactory but there are implementation problems, those of them who suggest changes relate them to individual settings. As a major weakness in the framework is deemed the flexibility of application, mainly because the special

measures for foreign students are decided by the various school managers. Their views on reception classes converge in their necessity, however, it is proposed to operate outside the school curriculum, as their function within the program delays the school and the children themselves. They expressed their views on the reception classes saying that they should better take place in the summer, the weekend, or at other times, after the normal schedule.

Another proposal is filed, that the municipalities should take over the conducting of such courses, which can monitor the children of all schools within the boundaries of each municipality. The secondary school teachers and high school highlight the need for children to be taught not only the language but also elements of Greek culture, that is, propose changes geared towards the education of children and, as far as possible, their successful integration into the education system and Greek society, while teachers pay particular attention to the school with the local community, as a process that will help and support the understanding of cultures and solidarity among different nationalities.

Teachers at all levels, request of national seminar activities to be made so that they can cope with the new multicultural reality, which, until now, they face with their own actions and initiatives. They note, however, that these sessions should be substantially made of suitable trainers. The secondary school teachers and high school, also consider it necessary to recruit psychologists and social workers in schools, which will support children and therefore the same in their work.

The change and the modernization of the curriculum is considered as a priority, proposed by all teachers. The Elementary Teachers refer to a course material that has the dimension of multiculturalism, the Lyceum propose to introduce courses on racism and human rights, while the Gymnasium teachers refer to the general restructuring to make it more meaningful. All of them also seek better schools and emphasizing on the secondary school teachers, they seek smaller schools and smaller portions to better supervise children.

C. Section: Addressing the situation in the school.

In this section I wanted to record practices for addressing multicultural reality in this school, to highlight the problems of these applications and the role of teachers as the main body and enforcer of policies.

In a few cases they mentioned some specific measures implemented in schools, again mentioned as a disadvantage the flexibility offered by the institutional framework. Each school benefits from the flexibility and ambiguity of the framework and applies or not specific measures for foreigners. According to the general opinion of teachers, the jurisdiction is given to the school manager to cause or not the operation of the Reception Classes, has no positive results, because in this way the necessity is outweighed by the view of the Administration. Thereby it is not ensured the continuity of their operation, if the administration change may cause a change in school policy on this issue.

Also it is noted the usual practice, that is, if taken these classes, the teacher is considered as less capable, while it must be recognized that the teacher must have increased abilities to take over such courses; it happens quite the opposite, with similar results. In addition, the Administration has the option of choosing whether to record foreign students (in order to maintain permanent positions), without necessarily caring about these children, either by applying a selective policy to discourage and indirectly urge them to look for other schools. Such programs, where applied, had two main drawbacks, the one was that started late and not in the beginning of the school year, thus creating problems in the coherence. The second problem was that there were recruited teachers who had no experience and were also unknown to the children. But as the teachers generally accepted, some important books were published that help many of teachers in their work.

In this context, teachers are self-reactive through assisting foreign children to understand the Greek language and their general integration into the school environment by taking initiatives to address problems arising between foreign and native students. Teachers of Elementary evaluate positively their own contribution to integrating children, but emphasize the importance of the broader social environment, which in some cases cancels their own efforts.

D. Section: Comments for the students.

In this section I wanted to record the perception-image of teachers for foreign students and potential differences that they observe between nationalities, and to assess the parameters themselves which are thought to affect the school performance of these children. I wanted also to highlight the role of external factors in the educational process.

In many cases teachers, at all levels, identify the foreign children with Albanian ones and directly or indirectly they refer to this nationality. They believe that the high level of education of the parents and the long presence of the family in the country, which implies participation in the Greek educational system of basic education, is a positive influence on children's progress. But the most important factor is the economic (economic distress), which generally and adversely affects children (with whatever exceptions), because many children work to help their families, so they do not have time for their studies. However, this work has a positive impact because it offers the children the chance to experience a familiarity with the calculations and therefore foreign children are good students in the course of mathematics. As observed by the teachers of primary school, foreign students have a special inclination to mathematics for the above reason, but also because these courses do not necessarily require a good knowledge of Greek. The secondary school teachers, more than teachers of other levels refer with negative characterizations about the behavior of these children, but feel that they will progress (because progress is considered by foreigners as a way for social advancement and affirmation). Also they point out that foreign children have difficulty in understanding different cultures, this difficulty is particularly apparent with the increasing demands of learning (history, literature, etc.).

Teachers at all levels, agree that children of different nationalities, they mainly refer to the Greek-foreign relations, have good relations, but not essential ones. These superficial relationships are maintained mainly to school and only rarely develop friendly or gender relations, outside. An important role to for such relations is played by Greek parents. Basic consequences of inadequate socialization are observed in racist surges on one side and self-isolation from the other. As a result, the safest way

to be accepted by the school community a foreign student is to have good performance in the courses.

The Elementary Teachers estimate that most foreigners will evolve, will thrive and be integrated; on the contrary, the secondary school teachers and high school believe that although some children will thrive, this is not applicable for the majority that will have a limited and predetermined limits and development. Most foreign children choose the Technical Education, the Night School or stop their studies.

The Greek parents are involved in school for school issues as well as issues related to the presence of foreign students, while the parents of foreigners, for cultural reasons, lack of free time or ignorance of the Greek language do not interfere. These interventions are more frequent in primary than at other levels. At least so far, there have not been observed any responses or interventions in schools on issues related to the presence of foreign students by the local community or other non-formal providers.

Overall, secondary school teachers expressed somewhat more negatively than the teachers of other grades for the new multicultural reality in schools, because, as repeatedly stated, are facing several problems, whether related to foreign students' adaptation difficulties in the education system, or rivalries created among children of foreigner and natives. Elementary, is not of large requirements for the students, and if problems arise due to failure or cultural differences, teachers are flexible to all students and foreigners. Children enter the secondary school with basic deficiencies on one side and have to meet high demands on the other. In high school, the problems appear blunted, possibly because it has already occurred leakage from one stage to another of all the students who had already had problems. In the advanced levels of education (Gymnasium -Highschool), there are observed phenomena of racist attacks (verbal or otherwise) among students of different nationalities, a phenomenon that is almost nonexistent in the primary school. Generally, there are reserved fragile balances among the students that are very easily changed and in some cases cause minor upsets. Some teachers rose as a point of friction between students or Greek parents and the school, the issue of the flag, and who will carry it in the parades. In several there is this racist notion that the flag should not "crawl" in parades with criteria such as height, the performance of the student or others. If the students during

the parades held the flag of the school instead of the Greek flag, we would have a cause of recrimination eliminated.

Let us note here that the number of foreign students is falling dramatically from the secondary to high school. This stems from the statistics of the country's schools and the data of the schools I visited. So in Secondary school (1st, 2nd and 3rd grade), from the interviews that I have conducted, the foreign student population rarely exceeds 10% of the total, while the Elementary and High school in several schools, they are more than 50%. In addition, I should note that even from the one high school class to the next, to some extent the leak continues. According to the estimates of teachers, most of the foreign students will continue after the Secondary school to High School, and they will finish their education and some of them will go to the University.

General Conclusions.

Teachers expressed their views on issues related to the presence of foreign students based on their experience in relation to their worldview and these views highlight issues related to the organization and the future of the educational system, as well as the organization of society in general, in the light of the new multicultural reality.

It is estimated that the increase in foreign student population as a percentage of the total is an expected development, mainly associated with the low birth rate of the Greeks and much less with the increase in their number. The consequences of this development in Greek society are stressed, particularly the increase of racism in the Greek population, and also a concern about the future of these children and their country is expressed. As prevention or mitigation of these effects, it is suggested that those measures are deemed as necessary for the integration of immigrants. By most of the teachers, it is viewed as integration, the assimilation of these children in the so far dominant model of socialization of the country, though there are various views that stress the need of acceptance of a new multicultural society.

The integration, according to the first aspect, is understood as a process of "localization" of this population, and in this view, the training aims both to teach the Greek language to these children, and to take additional actions for their socialization in the Greek environment. With this perspective, it is assessed the degree of successful integration of a student with his participation in National days celebrations and in the course of Religion or the morning pray. In contrast, the second view considers as necessary the school reorientation in order to meet the needs of a multicultural society and believes that any delay towards this direction can cause more distortions which may negatively affect the educational community and society, given the two-way relationship education system and social structure of the country.

To address the issues related to the presence of foreign students, as in general the whole immigrant population, it is considered necessary for the state to take the role it deserves. Teachers are requesting from the state to settle issues related to education, and not only to education, since the so far practices and omissions have already brought adverse effects. The general prejudices and the adoption of racist practices by some teachers and indigenous students' parents seem to be the inevitable consequence in an unprepared society. Noting that surveys, held for parents of native students of primary and secondary school, found that to a greater or lesser extent, they hide xenophobic opinions and exhibit similar behaviors⁸².

These xenophobic attitudes define how these parents face the attendance of the foreign students in Greek schools. The same survey, addressed to teachers and concluded that several of them (three in ten), are disturbed by the fact that they teach a considerable number of foreigners.

The teachers of our sample express too some dissatisfaction to the presence of foreign students in their classes, but in most times (with the advantage of the open questionnaire), this dissatisfaction is interpreted as the result of the problems associated with that presence, having of course cases of teachers finding the very presence as irritating.

⁸² The survey was conducted in 2011 by KAPA RESEARCH on behalf of UNICEF in the two largest cities of the country, namely Athens and Thessaloniki. According to the data, half (52%) of the respondents state that the presence of the migrants is of great concern and many (16%) that the presence of foreigners is annoying. Only a small percentage (12%) of parents believes that the new multicultural reality is an interesting development for our society.

The overall assessment of teachers in regard to the increase of foreign student population, could be the central axis of the educational and social policy. The teachers connect this development to the sustainability of schools and in extension their own profession that is changed according to the new reality and gets harder. Also, they refer to the issues of integration of children, the restatement of educational programs, the preparation of the educational sector and society in general with substantial education in order to meet the new challenges. The issues raised are, an education that does not address the teacher as a passive receiver, that nothing is planned leaving the teachers' views aside, that is associated with the school reality in order to answer its needs and of course will be conducted by trainers who will take their role seriously and not as a typical bureaucratic process.

The immigration processes so far teach us that a significant number of immigrants, particularly their children, remain in the host country. The question is, what will be the future of these children, not only from the humanitarian perspective, but also from the requirements for a cohesive society. The Greek state seemed unprepared to face both the medium demands set by the migration reality and the long-term ones concerning either the host society or the immigrants and especially their children. The policies that were made had either intrinsic weaknesses or were patchy, making them ineffective. For example, the obstacles associated with the implementation of intercultural education in the country and related to existing conditions and the Greek state structure, or as succinctly put: a) the national state continues to play an essential role in the new era, and generally displays a reluctance to meet the new requirements for the recognition of cultural particularities and otherness, b) there is not one, but many types of students with special cultural and linguistic backgrounds, c) the Greek school, but also the broader social environment, put strong conformational strain on repatriated and foreign students, according to the logic of "uniformity", d) the Greek state has not yet clarified its policy towards the refugees and migrants that it hosts, that is to decide if it is a policy of assimilation as it happens to the US or non-assimilation, similar to that of Germany⁸³.

Our teachers agree with these general observations and indicate either some of these problems that they consider essential, or all of these, or others, that should be

⁸³ Sklavou K., "Οδηγός Διαπολιτισμικής Εκπαίδευσης", Ελληνικό Συμβούλιο για τους Πρόσφυγες, 2004, p.21.

resolved immediately. The issue of education of the children of migrants is not only an obligation of the state for reasons of morality and related to the overall concept of the future society, but also a matter dictated by international conventions and in particular the International Convention on the Rights of the Child. But the phenomenon of improper care for the children of migrants is not only Greek, it is also observed in other countries, such as the Netherlands and Belgium, which, although they have ratified the International Convention on the Rights of the Child and thereby gave legal status to the right of individuality, respect to the origins of each child and the teaching of tolerance, however, on a practical level for education, there have not been any important steps taken. Therefore, it is imperative to find those approaches that will help children's education and are in line with the spirit of this agreement ⁸⁴.

In Greece, there are policies which have been already implemented in order to address the issue of these children's education, so the critical need for their evaluation and a strategic development of new ones is feasible and urgent. The establishment of separate schools for foreigners and the application of quotas in public schools, is clearly rejected by teachers as measures that are anti-educational and impractical, therefore, the new policies should not address the new multicultural school reality with such measures.

The children of migrants, which are the potential citizens of the country future, have to face the problems existing in education and in society in general. This is a common basis of reflection for teachers, who according to their views and experiences they submit proposals to address these problems. The interrelation between the neighborhood and the school is highlighted, as the influences caused by the social environment are transferred to the school premises, thus it is significantly determined the level and quality of social relations between the Greeks and foreigners. Among the native and foreign students there are dividing lines, which are either visible or fester as mutual wariness and can easily emerge on the first opportunity. As mentioned above, a UNICEF survey revealed the prejudices of parents transferred to their children at school. This assessment is done by our teachers too, who point out that the relationship between the children of different nationalities

⁸⁴ Vandenbroeck M., "Με τη ματιά του Γέτι. Η καλλιέργεια του σεβασμού του «άλλου» στην εκπαίδευση", 2004, Translation: Γ. Βογιατζής, Χ., Γεμελιάρης, Επιμέλεια Α. Χουντουμάδη, Α Βαφέα, Τετράδια 12 νήσος, p. 17.

and the Greek students is greatly influenced by parents of the native students, as a result they are not substantial and remain within the school boundaries while quite often become explosive. In this sense, they are not considered as real relations, only just as a random coexistence of students during the educational process, which may in the future develop into parallel social subsets. Just on this point, the research initiative of two professors, showed that relations between pupils of different nationalities, in their particular school, which it seems is rather a general finding for the other schools too, are not good⁸⁵.

The role of teachers should be either to smooth out the differences or, even more, to enhance the development of mutual trust among the students of different nationalities. It is an important role and with the proper training it can be even more effective. Of course it is involved here the role of the state and its orientation strategies towards the migration phenomenon.

The school and the wider social environment, along with the special difficulties that the foreigners face as students and young people looking for their place in society, form the terms and conditions of a general marginalization of these children, a phenomenon that is increasingly more visible. But each host society must take into account what the international experience has shown so far; that an ethnic group that is discriminated can be the basis for the mobilization of various minority groups to articulate their requests and requirements concerning the social and political scene. Nowadays, Greece has to deal with the defense of the political, cultural or religious rights for the immigrant children. This reality is a result firstly of consolidating the position of minority groups as ethnic-cultural entities, and on the other hand of the majority perception that these groups are decidedly different.

Although there are teachers who are optimistic about the progress of these children, especially through their assimilation, however, it seems that important factors affect and determine their conditions of evolution, many of which can be positively influenced by appropriate policies. According to the responses of the sampled teachers, the factors that influence the development of immigrant children can be divided into external, i.e. those associated with the host society and in

⁸⁵ Petropoulos P. , Kyvelea N., “Διερεύνηση των αντιλήψεων των αλλοδαπών μαθητών της Δ/θμιας Εκπ/σης του Νομού Μεσσηνίας, σχετικά με τη σχολική τους ένταξη”, International Conference of Sociology.

particular the institution of school, and internal, namely those related to the immigration community itself.

In the first case, it is acclaimed as dominating the state's role in the integration of the children in the Greek society, with interventions aiming at the preparation of the teachers to deal with the new reality and to prepare children from an early age to understand the Greek educational system. Another intervention involves the restructuring of teaching, which reflects two trends, either towards a multicultural direction or as a process that will integrate foreigners into the national model, and in this perspective, the concept of integration coincides with assimilation. Finally, any intervention by the state should target to change the role of the school by enhancing the school's relationship with the society.

In the second case, we see the economic factor, which as a key variable affects the development of the children. Other factors are the level of parents' education and the length of their stay in the country and therefore the involvement or not of a child in the Greek educational system from primary school and on. The influence of these factors, external and internal, it is important, according to the observations of our teachers and the findings of the studies so far. The immigrant children have high leakage from education rates, either between the educational levels or in the same educational level.

The absence or lack of state intervention in the areas concerning immigrants, leaves a margin so the development of the children may be decisively influenced by the negative factors. In conclusion, we could describe the foreign students and potential future citizens of this country, as persons with a basic education or at best, as a graduate of Technical High School, in a non-permissive society, but of course, some exceptions are excluded. Given the current reality, if no action is taken, adverse consequences, that could be anticipated and prevented, will be inevitable unless the experience so far in Greece and at an international level is used and simultaneously dictate solutions.

CONCLUSIONS.

The development of the immigration policies in the European countries during the period 1950-1970 is highly connected to the fact that immigration was considered to be a temporary phenomenon. The educational policy was ruled by that conception so there was no prediction in order to shape an intercultural educational policy. Furthermore, it is recognized that societies are not culturally homogeneous, on the contrary they consist of different groups of various particularities. The result of this recognition is that those particular characteristics of each cultural group are preserved and that the unity is projected through the diversity. However, the truth is that we have societies which are on the one hand multicultural but on the other hand each group is isolated from the other. This general conception influenced and shaped the educational programs accordingly.

The intercultural approach of the general policies and the educational policy in particular came as an answer to the social implications caused by the cohabitation of the isolated groups mentioned on the paragraph above. The scientific researches and studies shed a sufficient amount of light in the relations among cultural and nation groups which live in the same society, not in a parallel cohabitation but under a scope of a mutual recognition. However, those applications in Europe were significantly influenced from the fact that Intercultural education is not perceived as a theoretical model of national education but as relative to a “problem”, especially to the “problem of refugees” or the “immigration issues”, meaning that education is related to immigration. By the term “Intercultural education” is defined the effectiveness of priority of the coexistence among different cultural particularities in a school environment, of enriching the educational context and the relation among children with cultural differences.

The issue of Intercultural education is complex. It is not limited to the design and implementation of just an education policy. Education is in general an institution, which shapes and is shaped by the society itself. At the same time, it reflects the needs of conservation and reproduction through the dual role that education has nowadays as an institution of socialization and social control. Therefore, the education of cultural minorities and foreigners is an extension of the needs of the society and particularly of government policy on how to deal with this cultural diversity.

As can be seen from the first part of my thesis, on highly multicultural societies there is skepticism about the form that education must take. On the one hand, the recognition and the preservation of cultural diversity are a request of modern societies and stay in line with the modern considerations of human rights, pluralism and the need of self-expressing, as well as the demands for a multicultural society. On the other hand, however, there is a risk of problems appearing in the social fabric, which can occur when the society is questioning the common values and cultural elements which compose and promote cohesion in a society. These two different conditions are more felt by the people who are culturally different. If these people do not embrace to some extent the cultural image of the dominant culture, it will not be possible to have the same career opportunities as the ones who do. So the risk of converting culture to a subculture is visible and can lead to many negative consequences on individual and social level.

In the context of this consideration, the overall orientation in education is unstable. Even in the most highly multicultural societies, although there is a bid to multicultural and intercultural approach in the educational process, in fact it is found that there is a different way of intercultural and anti-racist orientation. Although many intellectuals and teachers are to embrace the model of the Interculturalism, practice has shown that it is difficult to apply, perhaps because societies themselves are still not ready to accept this model.

The problem is that a society cannot be changed only by education, especially when in this society there are to a very large extent racist attitudes and social inequalities. On this matter, they are examined the external factors which affect the educational success of students from different cultural environments. It is no coincidence that in all countries, foreign students face major problems in their education, and it is evident from their high rates of failure at school. The most obvious reason is the difficulty of understanding a different language than the one they speak. This has a direct impact on the way they see and understand the knowledge offered to them at school. Of course, this is not the only reason. The surveys that have been carried out over the last 50 years in the field of social Education have demonstrated that the degree of success of a student at school depends directly on the external social components, which determine to a large extent the educational success of the student but also helping him/her to socialize.

Unfortunately there is inequality in education, and it starts from the social environment itself where the child is socializing while it's the place where pupils have the potential to increase their social and educational level. There is also inequality appearing in the school environment, as the school assesses students and directs them at different levels of the social pyramid, through the educational opportunities which are offered to the students. In particular, the children of economic migrants when they start living into the host country they are placed in the base of the social and economic pyramid, as well as the parents are not able to finance the education of their children. In addition just because these families are not aware of the culture and the language of the host country, it becomes more difficult for all the children to obtain equal access to education. Thus, it can be seen that the different cultural origin and the particular socio-economic characteristics of each category of immigrants have as a result a different type and intensity of the exclusions. This is happening due to the stereotypes deployed in public opinion for certain cultural categories and as a result some students do not participate in the field of education as, in a way, they are self-deferred from it.

This theoretical conclusion is verified in the case of Greece. In the different categories of migrants and repatriates Greeks who live in this country, the only common element is the lack of knowledge of the Greek language and Greek Culture. However, the differences among repatriates and foreign students in social and economic terms is huge. Therefore, the treatment of repatriates and foreign students from the Greek State shouldn't be the same for all and much more, Greek government should not apply educational policies to integrate both in the same context.

This finding is also justified by the results of the research carried out which shows the major differences identified in repatriates and foreign students. In accordance with the findings held, it was found that there was a greater exclusion from education for children coming from Albania because they are often targets of racist discrimination inside and outside of the school environment. Therefore, they tend to form marginalized groups from ethnic pupils, using a greater degree of Albanian language instead of the Greek. In addition, even the parents of these children, in many cases get racist comments, so it becomes clear that the external adversities which they face are greater than the children belonging to other cultures.

In this inequality of access to education, due to socio-economic factors, we should take into consideration the inefficiency of the intercultural schools in Greece. The simple juxtaposition of pupils from different cultures in a classroom is not created in the intercultural school, as well as the principle of intercultural education is not applied, nor a detailed program that follows this direction. In the case of Greece, therefore, these schools should be called multicultural because they don't follow the principles of Interculturalism.

The problems of organization and operation of these schools is large and are related to the observed lack of substructure and the insufficient training of teachers. The biggest problem is still the lack of clear guidance in schools, which cannot be solved without understanding the concept of intercultural education. This is why the following question should be primarily and convincingly answered: Does the Greek state consider immigrants in our country as temporary, namely in the status of the guest worker or as people who in a large percentage will stay permanently in Greece? If the perception that there is, is that of impermanence, it must be realized because in most countries in Western Europe there was a clear intention that immigrants are temporary and that was the basis on which schools for immigrants were operating. This is also the reason why intercultural education is considered today as ineffective.

If it is noticed that Greece will start becoming really multicultural, a careful planning is necessary in order to avoid the culturally different people to be marginalized from the Greek Society. An important part of that responsibility is necessarily given to the so-called intercultural school. The conclusions of the scientific work may be summed up as follows.

1. The Greek society has proved to be totally unsuitable to cope with the, primarily economic, immigrants. The suitable conditions which help the integration of immigrants in the Greek Society are not yet found. The operation of the education of foreigners is insufficient and ineffective as far as setting goals and following certain policies is concerned. The intercultural school concept in Greece is only in name intercultural no matter if the Greek legislation is upon a different direction. In most cases the school is multicultural only with the descriptive meaning of the term, while the efficiency in the operation of the school depends almost exclusively on the skills of teachers.

2. The biggest problem, concentrates on the external factors which determine the success of children attending intercultural schools. The State shall respect the principle of equality among cultural minorities, but needs to take into account the specific socio-economic conditions, the problems and needs of each cultural minority separately.

3. This issue is also evident, in the empirical research carried out, in the context of scientific work, it was found that different kind of problems of special cultural minorities produce a different type of exclusion from education.

4. Teachers themselves also do not seem to take into account the students' native language and their cultural background in the school process of learning Greek and acquiring knowledge, despite their interest in the progress of these children. They also do not feel sufficiently trained in the management of linguistic diversity and multiculturalism in the classroom and therefore feel that they need to be more educated on the subject.

5. In the face of a recent phenomenon for the Greek situation, that of the constant influx of immigrants, the Greek society and the Greek State are embarrassed. The educational system appears unable to effectively handle the presence of all-foreign students and refuses to give a place to their language and culture within the school. The fear of losing national identity, of distorting national culture, of the possible claims that these minorities may express- if they acquire a linguistic and cultural entity within the host country- make the school somehow "hostile" to these children.

In my opinion, if change is to occur, it is necessary to engage, on the one hand, in political action for a positive change of the society as a whole and on the other hand, in a wider educational effort, based not only on behavioral and psycho-sociological learning issues but also on cognitive and political learning issues. Education in the twenty-first century can become an essential contributor to integration, to a culture of peace, and to international understanding. Through this, we can assure respect for diversity, whether diversity of behavior, or diversity of philosophical or religious belief. Perhaps we might then all be able to live comfortably in a world of which Gandhi had a vision: *“I do not want my house to be walled in on all sides and my*

windows to be stuffed. I want the cultures of all lands to be blown about my house as freely as possible. But I refuse to be blown off my feet.⁸⁶

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ANNEX

- 1) Research Data for Early Childhood Teachers: the research was a quantitative one and was held by the students Μαρίνα Καραγιάννη and Σοφία Πετράκη of the Department of Education Sciences in Pre-School Age of Democritus University of Thrace and it was part of their thesis research. 63 professionals, working in the Western Thrace took part in the survey during the period May-June of 2018. Moreover, data were also taken by a pre-piloted questionnaire, completed by students of the 8th semester of the Department of early childhood care and education of the Technological Educational Institute of Thessaloniki as part of the internship of a female anonymous student during the year 2017.
- 2) Questionnaire for Gypsy children was formed in the basis of five thematic entities, namely: socio-demographic characteristics, education, work, residence, personal relationships. It includes open-ended and specific questions. The questionnaire was administered to Gypsy children from the ages 9 to 13. The study was carried out during the period before the Christmas holiday of the academic year 2017-2018 at the school for Gypsies which is located in a remote area of Thessaloniki. In total, the gypsy children were 30: 28 boys and 2 girls, but only 21 of them had completed the questionnaire.
- 3) Interviews with teachers of primary and secondary schools were structured in modules, according to the areas I wanted to explore, e.g. General assessment of the present and future situation in education, framework and policy applications in schools, characteristics of the student population, effects of exogenous factors in the educational process. My research was conducted in the area of Thessaloniki. The total respondents were 50 teachers. Especially by education level, gender, age, location, marital status and region:

- Primary school: Asked: 19. Gender: Male 7 Female 12

Age: Average = 42 years old.

Position: Teachers 16, Headmasters 3.

Family status: Single 3, Married 16.

Training: Further training 6.

Areas: Kato Toumpa, Triandria, Kalamaria, Ampelokipoi, Faliro, Nea Michaniona,

- Secondary School: Asked: 24. Gender: Male 8 Female 16

Age: Average = 45 years old.

Position: Teachers 20, Headmasters 4.

Family status: Single , Married 16, Divorced 1.

Training: Further training 7.

Areas: Mpotsari, Martiou, Evosmos, Stavroupoli , Ano Toumpa, Faliro, Ampelokipoi

- High School: Asked: 7. Sex: Male 3, Female 4.

Age: Average = 44.

Position: Professors 6 Headmaster 1.

Family. status: Single 1, Married 6.

Training: Further training 2.

Areas: Kato Toumpa, Stavroupoli, Mpotsari, Faliro, Triandria, Pylaia, Ampelokipoi.

Based on research ethics, I will not mention the names of teachers, nor the schools in which they teach, to ensure the anonymity of respondents. The respondents asked before the recording if they desire to keep their anonymity and they preferred to do so. The interviews were held in 2018 from February till June, morning hours after arranged meetings.

I hereby declare that, I wrote the preceding master's thesis independently and did not use any sources or means other than those indicated.

(Date)

(Signature)